

LIVELY PLAYS *



THOMAS STEWART DENISON

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

PS1534
Chap.----- Copyright No.-----

Shelf. I54L5

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

LIVELY PLAYS

—FOR—

LIVE PEOPLE

BY

THOMAS STEWART DENISON

AUTHOR OF

Thirty-six plays; also, "An Iron Crown," "The Man Behind,"
"Outlines of World's History," etc.



35802 aa'

CHICAGO:

T. S. DENISON, PUBLISHER,
163 RANDOLPH STREET.

PS 1534
J 54L5

LIVELY PLAYS.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Topp's Twins, comedy, four acts.....	5
Patsy O'Wang, farce.....	77
Rejected, farce.....	107
The New Woman, comedy, three acts.....	133
Only Cold Tea, temperance sketch.....	165
A First-Class Hotel, farce.....	179
Madame Princeton's Temple of Beauty, farce...	193
A Dude in a Cyclone, farce.....	207
It's all in the Pay Streak, comedy, three acts....	219
The Cobbler, a monologue.....	261

Copyright, 1895, by T. S. Denison.

ABOUT THE PLAY.

The first requisite in a play is *action*, after that should be found as much novelty of incident and freshness of dialogue, combined with originality in character study, as the author can contrive to get together in these days when apparently nothing is wholly new. These plays are intended primarily for *representation*.

These explanations are made because the purpose of a previous volume of my plays, issued without preface, appeared to have been misunderstood in a few instances.

Public approval, whether it be an infallible guide or not, in matters pertaining to print, is at least encouraging, and this leads me to say that of my earlier plays there have been sold in paper covers *three hundred and twenty thousand copies*, besides an edition in cloth.

THE AUTHOR.

Chicago, July 11, 1895.



TOPP'S TWINS

A FARCE-COMEDY IN FOUR ACTS

BY T. S. DENISON

Author of

Odds with the Enemy, Initiating a Granger, Wanted, a Correspondent, A Family Strike, Seth Greenback, Louva, the Pauper, Hans Von Smash, Borrowing Trouble, Two Ghosts in White, The Pull-Back, Country Justice, The Assessor, The Sparkling Cup, Our Country, Irish Linen Peddler, The School Ma'am, Kansas Immigrants, An Only Daughter, Too Much of a Good Thing, Under the Laurels, Hard Cider, The Danger Signal, Wide Enough for Two, Pets of Society, Is the Editor In? The New Woman, Patsy O'Wang, Rejected, Only Cold Tea, Madam P's Beauty Parlors, Topp's Twins, A First-Class Hotel, It's all in the Pay-Streak, The Cobbler, A Dude in a Cyclone, Friday Dialogues.

Also the Novels,

The Man Behind, An Iron Crown, etc.

CHICAGO:

T. S. DENISON, PUBLISHER,

163 RANDOLPH STREET.

TOPP'S TWINS.

CHARACTERS.

CADWALADER TOPP, of Topp & Topp, twin brothers, oyster dealers; old bachelor, irascible, vain, great stickler for "honah;" wants to adopt twins; family tradition; stout man.

TICK. (*Alias* JIM BAGGS.) Traveling man of Topp & Topp; typical drummer, rather cheeky, quick, appears braver than he is; ready for any adventure or practical joke.

JOSIAH TWIGGS, old friend of Tick's father; parent of Angie and Mrs. Twiggs-Knott, who calls herself "Twiggs hyphen Knott."

MRS TWIGGS, a mother and grandmother of "Twigg-sie and Dixie," the twins.

MRS. TWIGGS-KNOTT, mother of the twins, and a widow who knows how to get what she wants.

ANGIE TWIGGS, a bright young lady.

BOB SPRATT, seedy adventurer; he tries to work off his twins on Topp; in revenge precipitates the duel; villain of the play.

MRS. DUBBEDAM, housekeeper from Holland; good-natured, slow, loquacious.

GINGER POTTS, an African; body servant of Mr. Topp; a good deal of the monkey; comic by nature and *good* in theory, which theory is sometimes not fully supported by facts.

DR. SHORT, the surgeon, an animated wooden man. Personages not appearing on the stage, the *real* twins, "Twigg-sie and Dixie;" also Bob Spratt's twins, the victims of circumstances, and called for the occasion, Benjamin Harrison Spratt and Grover Cleveland Spratt.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of the stage; *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *1 E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance, etc; *D. F.*, door in flat or back of the stage. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

Time of playing, two hours.


BILL OF THE PLAY.

ACT I. Topp's family tradition demands twins.

ACT II. "She's a little angel, I'll see her father."

ACT III. "Yes, Topp old boy, you are in love for the first time in twenty years." But the odious rival appears just at the wrong time and precipitates disaster.


ACT IV. The duel. The finding of the Twins.

 Though this play has full stage directions, it may be presented in any hall, or large parlor even. Two doors for exit and entrance is the main requirement. Owing to the style of type the play is not so long as it seems.

PROPERTIES.

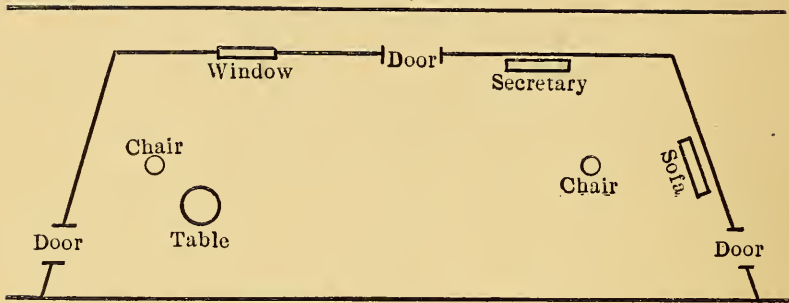
Numerous dummy letters, newspaper in wrappers, writing materials, gunny sack, pair of corncutters, surgeon's kit, brace of pistols in case for Spratt, also two other pistols, pocket tape-line, cards for Spratt and Tick, note books, coins, crash bag of broken glass.

Note. If no scenery is at hand suitable for Act IV, it may be played simply on bare stage stripped of all furniture and accessories.

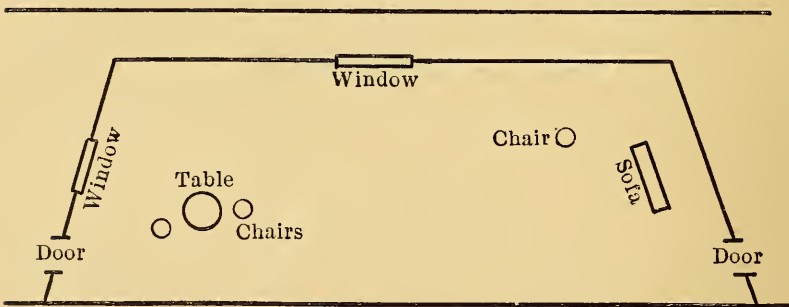
 For hints on play, see page 72.

TOPP'S TWINS.

Acts I & III



Act II



Act IV.

Landscape Scene at Dueling Ground.

TOPP'S TWINS.

ACT I.

SCENE. *Home of MR. TOPP. Handsome sitting room of a wealthy man. Doors R. & L. in 1 E. (N. B.—Street door is always L., way to interior of house always R.); also door in flat C. Table and chairs R. C. Small secretary, with mirror over it by flat L. C.*

GIN. (*Entering L. with mail.*) I never see de like of de mail; dah's a bushel o' letters an' one paper. (*Puts letters on table; part slide off on floor; he does not see them.*) Dat paper is de *Sun*. Massa done read de *Baltimore Sun*, mos' ever since de creation I 'low. (*Reads on the wrapper "Topp & Topp, No. 3 Druid Hill Place."*) Didn't I read dat easy. Pshaw! I kin read heaps, 'ticulary if dah's a picter to sort o' steer by. My poor ole mommy couldn't read nothin' but de wrapper, an' I 'spect she guessed at dat. Crackey! edication is mighty powerful sometimes. My ole mommy couldn't read an' she (*pauses*)—humph, she sold for a thousand dollahs befoh de wah. What 'ud *you* sell foh, Ginger Potts? You good fur nothin' nigger, you wouldn't fetch a blame cent. But your vote, dat's spot cash. (*Bell rings.*) Foh de Lord's sake, w'at ails dat bell. It's done ringin' all de time (*Exit L.*).

ENTER MRS. DUBBLEDAM *R.*

MRS. D. I nefer saw tings like dot already. Seven men haf been at de side door to sell leetle togs to Meester Topp. I get dem all away so gwick as ever for Meester Topp he hates togs already fery much. He vas a mighty gweer man, an' he gets no better, aint it; he say to me sudden like one day: "Mrs. Tuppletam, we must have some twins." I tinks to myself, Meester Topp, was you cracy? I felt myself yoost like a puzzle, and he yoost keep silence; dot silence was embarrassed, so I said a little sharp, "Vere you get some twins if you please, Mr. Topp?" Dot man was awful curious, ven I haf temper he haf none, sometimes, and sometimes he haf too much; dot time he vas very quiet, an' his voice like a woman's—a woman, ven she is not mat—

ENTER GINGER, *L 1, with more letters.*

GIN. What racket is massa into now, Mrs. Dubbledam?

MRS. D. Twins. He says, "My gran'fater was twins, an' my fater oont uncle was twins; my poor brudder an' me was twins, an' I'm goin' to have some twins to run my pisness and pack oysters." I yoost thought I'd fall in a heap. I guessed dot man was talkin' out of his head alretty; I could say not one wort, but he turned round an' walked out. Dot was de piggest puzzle about dem twins. So yesterday, at breakfast, he say sudden like, "Tuppletam, I'm goin' to advertise for dose twins."

GIN. Land o' honey, Mrs. Dubbledam, look at de letters. (*Puts them on the table and some fall on the floor.*)

MRS. D. Well, I nefer; where does de letters come from, Ginger? Apout tem twins? What a lot o' peoples

bin havin' twins! Twins must be plentier dan per-simmons.

GIN. De postman says dese letters belong here; dey wouldn't take 'em at Number 5.

MRS. D. I yoost get even on Number 5; I'll send Number five de togs.

GIN. What dogs?

MRS. D. Dere's been seven, nine men here mit togs dis mornin'.

GIN. De dickens! ole massa'll take a fit.

MRS. D. All sorts 'o togs at dot side door. Big Newfounlant togs, rat togs, sky pups, oont all dot. Dey make me real mat sayin' so often dot we want no togs. (*Bell rings.*)

GIN. Blame dat bell.

MRS. D. Ginger, why aint you more gwick answerin' dot bell?

GIN. (*Imitating her accent.*) Nefer mint, I'm gwick enough already, aint it? Say, I wonder—(*bell violently*)—if somebody isn't playing a trick on ole massa? (*Voice inside from door in flat.*) "Potts, the bell." Geeminy; ole massa done heerd. Say, anybody fotch any kids yet?

MRS. D. Dere was no shildrens yet.

GIN. Dey'll come later, dey don't git up so airly as de dogs. (*Bell violently, voice again.*) "Where's that infernal niggro." (*Exit GIN rapidly, L.*)

MRS. D. Dat niggero gets so slow, efery day more. Dear me, I'll nefer get my work done to-day between te togs, te letters oont, Meester Topp's whims, oont twins, oont sooch like. (*Exit R.*)

RE-ENTER GINGER *with* TICK L.

GIN. Massa aint done brekfusted yet.

TICK. (*Seating himself by table, R. C.*) I'll wait.

GIN. Sometimes massa's powerful slow comin' down, hadn't yeh bettah send in youah cahd?

TICK. No, thanks; my business can be transacted with him only.

GIN. (*Aside.*) Dat's bout de twins suah. 'Scuse me, but did you fotch de kids along?

TICK. What's that?

GIN. De chillen. Whah's de chillen?

TICK. Children? I'm no married man.

GIN. Dat so? Well, I 'low dat *does* make *some* difference. (*Bell again.*) Wisht dat bell was in Jericho; dere's too many people comin' here I know. It's de sign on de dooh. Massa Topp'll jest naterally kill dat painter who fumbled up dat 3 so ye can't tell it from de 5, nor de 5 from de 7. It's turnin' de whole neighborhood crazy. (*Exit L.*)

TICK. (*Taking up paper, reads on wrapper, "Topp & Topp."*) Hello, here's an adventure. I've got into the house of my employer, old Topp, of Topp & Topp, Oyster Packers. Well, it's too late to back out now, I'll sell him the dogs or break a trace trying. Lucky for me I'm on the road most of the time. I think he doesn't know me. He's as queer as all out o' doors. If he should discover me and get out of humor about it, he'd give me a passport to the street. (*Meditates.*) Ah, I have it; I'm not Jim Baggs at all. The boys used to call me Tickle. Laughed too easy and got thrashed for it every day, in school; it became Tick for short.

Now, I'm simply Tick, James Tick, Esq. (*Voice outside.* "I tell you I must see him.") Hello! more dogs?

ENTER GINGER AND SPRATT, *L.*

GIN. (*To SPRATT.*) Hadn't you bettah try No. 5, sah? I think dat's de place youall's lookin' foh.

SPRATT. I have tried No. 5 and they say No 3 is the place.

GIN. S'pose you try No. 7.

SPRATT. This is the place, I'm sure. I won't be put off. (*Takes chair, eyes TICK suspiciously.*)

GIN. Cahd, sir, I'll take in your cahd. (*SPRATT gives soiled card.*) (*Aside.*) Jiminy, dat's a dirty cahd, if I hand datcahd to Massa Topp he'll give me fits. (*Tears card and throws it under table.*) 'Scuse me (*to SPRATT*), w'at did ye say youah name was?

SPRATT. (*Grumbles.*) Confound the nigger. I gave you my card.

GIN. Massa is a little 'tickler; he doesn't like cahds.

TICK. I've been that way myself—after staying too long in the game

GIN. (*To SPRATT.*) Name, sah?

SPRATT. Spratt.

GIN. (*Grins.*) Jack Spratt?

SPRATT. Impertinent!

GIN. Yis, sah; long name, sah.

TICK. By the way, what is your name?

GIN. Potts, sah! Gingeh Potts.

TICK. Ginger; that's a lively name.

GIN. Name, sah!

TICK. Tick.

GIN. What's dat?

TICK. I said Tick, James Tick!

GIN. Dat aint no Christian name; ye's done fool-in' me.

TICK. (*Slipping coin into GINGER's hand.*) It isn't Tick, but Tick goes.

GIN. (*Bowing profusely.*) To be suah! James Tick, Esquire (*stress on Esq.*) an' Jack Spratt.

SPRATT. (*With offended dignity.*) Robert Spratt.

GIN. Yis, sah! James Tick, Esq., and Bob Spratt.

SPRATT. (*Aside.*) The monkey!

(*Exit GIN, D. F.*)

TICK. (*Eying SPRATT. Aside.*) If that guy is a dog fancier, then I'll quit the business.

SPRATT. (*Aside.*) He looks too young for a *father* in adversity. Guardian, possibly. (*To TICK.*) Our business is mutual, I presume.

TICK. I presume you know nothing about it.

SPRATT. (*Aside.*) A good guess. He is uneasy. (*To TICK.*) I presume we can be friendly about it.

TICK. (*Turning away.*) Presumption is a good thing—for a book agent.

SPRATT. (*Aside.*) A hard case to handle. I'll draw him out. (*To TICK.*) If I may ask, *father*?

TICK. Look here, stranger, you are impertinent.

SPRATT. Then, I am right: You *are* a father.

TICK. It's a lie; I'm not married!

SPRATT. Beg pardon; that makes *some* difference.

TICK. *Some!* What do you mean by that?

SPRATT. You need not be so touchy. This is a free and fair rivalry, isn't it?

TICK. What are you talking about? Are you an escaped lunatic?

SPRATT. You are insulting. (*Turns away angrily.*)

TICK. (*Aside.*) What is he up to? There's something here too deep for me!

SPRATT. (*Aside.*) I'd best conciliate him. (*To* TICK.) Guardian, perhaps?

TICK. Guardian! What do I think of them on general principles? I don't like them. I had one once. He spent all my money, then married my only sister and spent hers. I've no use for them. I recommend you to take one.

SPRATT. Me! Confound your insinuation. You mistake me entirely. I—

ENTER TOPP, *D. F.*, comes down C.

TOPP. (*Eyes them with quick keen scrutiny.*) Good morning, gentlemen, which is Mr. Dick Spratt?

SPRATT. (*Rushing up with card.*) Robert Spratt, sir.

TICK. (*Rushing up with card, each trying to get ahead of the other.*) Here's my card sir, I represent—confound it (*hastily pocketing card*); (*aside*) "card of the firm; (*confused*) my name is James Tick, *Esquire*.

TOPP. (*With slight emphasis.*) Oh, I see, James Tick, *Esquire*; and Robert Spratt, *Esquire*, too, I presume? Your business, gentlemen.

SPRATT. (*Trying to get ahead of TICK.*) I have just what you want sir, right here, lovely disposition, good health, good stock, pardon me if I say it myself.

TICK. (*Insinuating himself before SPRATT.*) Pardon me my house—hang it, I don't mean house—my goods are A 1, good health, clean skin, and the most beautiful long ears.

SPRATT. (*Contemptuously.*) Long ears! I'd be ashamed to tell it!

TICK. Long winded, trim in the flank—

SPRATT. Flanks! that's indelicate!

TICK. Delicacy, indeed; I'd like to know what delicacy has to do in this case!

TOPP. (*Annoyed and puzzled.*) Nothing, it seems, gentlemen; what on earth are you rowing about? If you have any business, we'll reach it sooner one at a time.

SPRATT. (*Vociferating.*) I was here first.

TICK. That's false, I was here first. Wasn't I Ginger?

SPRATT. That infernal nigger sent me away three times before he'd let me in.

TOPP. (*Stiffly.*) We will consider you first. Proceed.

SPRATT. As I said, lively disposition, good health, good stock—

TICK. Can you furnish a written pedigree?

SPRATT. Pedigree! I am making a note of your insulting language. (*To TOPP.*) In short, they are just what you want.

TICK. Health is very important, but allow me—
(*TOPP frowns at TICK who stops.*)

SPRATT. Their names sir, are—

TOPP. Bother the names! Gentlemen, I fail to comprehend the object of this interview. I deem your business absurd. If you have any proposition to submit do it in writing.

SPRATT. My dear sir, the pen cannot do justice to my lovely—

TICK. By the way, are they mangy?

SPRATT. I'll stand this no longer, your language

is slanderous. (*Shakes his fist at TICK.*) If I had you outside!

TOPP. A vulgar brawl. (*Enraged.*) This is too much. (*Pulls bell by D. F.*) A row between two ruffians in my own house.

ENTER GINGER, R.

TOPP. Potts, show these gentlemen out.

SPRATT. Potts, didn't I come first?

TICK. (*Winking at GIN.*) Look here; you know I came first.

GIN. (*To TOPP.*) I think dey come sumiltudinous. I'm 'fraid dey won't go. Dey's de most obstinatest chaps I ever see.

TOPP. Then kick them out—call a policeman. Get rid of them.

GIN. (*To SPRATT.*) Now you heah dat? Cleah out!

SPRATT. (*Backing towards door L.*) This is outrageous. (*To TOPP.*) I'll bring an action for damages. (*To TICK.*) This is your work, you villain. I'll get even—(*GIN. seizes him by the collar and runs him out L.*)

TICK. (*Aside.*) I'm going to see what this old cock does want anyway.

RE-ENTER GIN. L.

GIN. Now sah, dah's de door.

TICK. (*Looking.*) So it is. A door's a door even if there's nothing in it. (*Gives him a coin. GIN bows and slips out, leaving TICK, down C. TOPP opening letters R. of table.*)

TOPP. Annoyances go in troops, it appears. I can't understand why I should get all these letters and have so many callers too. (*Reads letter.*)

"Mr. X., 3 Druid Hill Place:

"Sir: Having seen your advertisement for lady amanuensis, I hereby apply for the place. I am not exactly a brunette, but have beautiful, wavy, light-brown hair with blue eyes. Am tall, slender and graceful, and my friends say I am good-looking."

Well, really that's a strange letter.

TICK. (*Aside.*) Oho! this is getting interesting.

TOPP. What the deuce does the woman mean? I shall need an amanuensis if I answer all these. (*Throws letter aside toward TICK and opens two or three more; TICK picks up letter.*)

TOPP. (*Reading.*) "Dear Sir:—I think I can fill the bill exactly." What bill? That is direct. Signed, Maud Martin. (*Opens another.*)

TICK. (*Reading.*) "I Dress stylish and am fond of"—(*Pause to make out word*).

TOPP. (*Reading.*) I am a light blonde with clear rosy complexion and am"—(*Pause to decipher word*).

TICK. (*Reading.*) "Fond of amusements, particularly"—

TOPP. (*Reading, puzzled.*) What is that?—am—am—edicated—vulgar thing—no, it is not edicated, (*spells*) eddicted—indeed—to the theatre. Hum; I'm not surprised.

TICK. (*Reading.*) "Opera parties and a quiet"—

TOPP. Dear me, this is all very curious. She evidently thinks complexion and the cut of her gown has something to do with stenography. (*Stops to think, puzzled, opens another. Amazed to see TICK reading letter.*)

TICK. —"and a quiet little oyster supper." Oh! the old sinner. I'm onto him.

TOPP. (*Flushing angry.*) Look here, sir, are *you* here yet? And reading my letters too! This is most extraordinary! This is too much, sir!

TICK. It *is* too much for *one*. You need help!

TOPP. Help! What do you mean, sir? I can manage my affairs without your assistance. I thought I told Potts to show you out. (*Rings bell viciously.*) Where is that nigger?

ENTER GIN. D. F.

GIN. Did you ring, sah?

TOPP. Did I ring? I've been ringing all morning.

GIN. (*Bowing.*) Yis, sah!

TOPP. Potts, show this man out.

GIN. I done showed him de door wunst.

TOPP. Show it to him again. Show him the outside of it.

GIN. Yis, sah.

TOPP. What about these letters? They are apparently not mine.

GIN. De postman done tote 'em heah. Dey wouldn't have 'em at No. 5.

TOPP. What has No. 5 to do with my mail? I have not advertised for any amanuensis. Take them to No. 5 and say it's about the amanuensis.

GIN. (*Bewildered.*) A—man—you—and—what sort of a man did you say, sah?

TOPP. Go! Say nothing! Pick up those on the floor.

TICK. (*Aside.*) The sly old dog. He's hedging.

TOPP. (*Looking at envelope.*) Potts!

GIN. Yis, sah!

TOPP. How did the postman get this address mixed up with No. 5? That's a plain enough 5.

GIN. Ye see it's like dis, massa, he's a new man 'an de painter done put so many querliques on de figgers when he painted new numbers las' week dat ye can't tell de 3 from de 5, nur de 5 from de 7. De 3 has a handle to it, an' de 5 has whiskers, an' de 7 looks powerful groggy, 'an sorter bow-legged.

TOPP. Oh! high art on a transom. I see.

GIN. Yes, sah! High art, so high de postman couldn't see it.

TOPP. Have our number re-painted plainly at once, and see that it is a 3. Counfound this so-called artistic lettering. People will take the place for a Chinese laundry. (*Bell, exit GIN.*) (*To TICK.*) Aren't you going, sir? Can't you take a hint?

TICK. (*Bowing politely.*) I am waiting to be shown out. (*Moves down L.*)

TOPP. (*Apologetically.*) Oh, to be sure! I beg your pardon.

TICK. Don't mention it.

RE-ENTER GIN. *L. with* MRS. TWIGGS-KNOTT,
she goes up C.

GIN. (*Announces.*) Mrs. Twiggs-Knott.

TOPP. (*Advancing.*) Eh? What is the name?

MRS. T-K. Twiggs-hyphen-Knott.

TOPP. Ah, to be sure! To what do I owe the pleasure of this call, Mrs. Twiggs-hafaknot?

MRS. T-K. I beg your pardon! It isn't Twiggs-hyphen-Knott! simply Twiggs-Knott. I spell it with a hyphen.

TOPP. And pronounce it without a hyphen.

MRS. T-K. Yes.

TOPP. I see. I beg your pardon, madam! (*Aside.*) Devilish fine woman!

MRS. T-K. Twiggs, maiden name; Twiggs-Knott, married name.

TOPP. I comprehend, perfectly. (*Aside.*) A widow!

TICK. (*Aside.*) I wonder if the old Mormon will take this trick?

TOPP. Mrs. Twiggs-Knott, may I enquire to what I owe this pleasure?

MRS. T-K. Certainly! I called in answer to your advertisement!

TOPP. (*Starting.*) There's a mistake!

TICK. (*Aside.*) Sly old dog!

MRS. T-K. I think there is no mistake. I called at No. 5, and they said it was No. 3.

TOPP. I am sure it must be one of my neighbors. May the devil take that painter! I mean, begging pardon madam, try No. 7. (*Aside.*) An adventuress.

MRS. T-K. I did try 7 and they said they couldn't be pestered with other people's callers. They were sure this is the right place.

TOPP. A fig for their assurance! I wish people would mind their own business. (*Aside.*) Good Lord deliver me! (*To Mrs. T-K.*) Madam, go home and make an inventory of your attractions.

Mrs. T-K. Sir!

TOPP. Schedule your charms!

MRS. T-K. They are indeed very charming.

TOPP. (*Aside.*) The brazen baggage! (*To her.*) Make out your specifications.

TICK. Marked "Exhibit A," etc.

MRS. T-K. Is it so very important as that?

TOPP. (*Aside.*) I'll scare her away! (*To her.*) Oh! yes, of the utmost importance. The strain is especially—

TICK. Yes, the strain is everything, mine is all O. K. in the books.

TOPP. (*Surprised.*) Say now! Are you here yet, young man? Explain your conduct, sir. Confound you, you are listening to a private conversation.

TICK. I'm waiting to be shown out.

TOPP. Oh, to be sure! Where is that infernal nigger. (*Rings bell.*)

TICK. The pedigree of mine is without a flaw. They are from Spots, mother Fly, sire, Robinson Crusoe. (*TOPP and MRS. T-K Look puzzled.*) Are yours down in the books?

MRS. T-K. In the books? I don't understand you.

TICK. Who was their sire?

MRS. T-K. Sir? Their sire? This is grossly insulting. (*Screams.*) Oh, dear me, oh, oh. Sir (*To TOPP*), are you a man to see a woman thus insulted in your own house?

TOPP. (*Crosses to L., to TICK.*) What the devil are you doing?

TICK. I don't know.

MRS. T-K. (*Screams hysterically*) Oh, my precious darlings! Oh, my dear little angels! Oh, I shall faint!

TOPP. She's going to faint. (*Prances around excitedly.*) Where's that nigger?

MRS. T-K. (*Hysterically.*) Help! (*About to faint.*)

TOPP. Allow me madam! (*About to support her. TICK adroitly slides between, catching her*)

TICK. Allow me madam!

MRS. T-K. (*Hastily standing erect.*) You! Oh, you

wretch! How dare you! I'll leave this house at once, since a lady is not free from insult here.

TOPP. But, madam, allow me to explain—I beg you will not be hasty, stay—there she goes—(*She exits in dudgeon. L.*) (*To TICK.*) This is disgraceful, sir!

TICK. I quite agree with you, and at your age too. Now why do you prefer a blonde? Brunettes are more to my taste.

TOPP. (*In towering passion.*) Your taste? Blonde! Brunette! I have expressed no choice, you impertinent coxcomb. Why don't you go? Where *is* that nigger? If he doesn't kick you down stairs, I will. (*Going to bell.*)

ENTER GIN. *L.* ANGIE following appears in door.

GIN. Massa Topp, a young lady dat wants to see you.

TOPP. (*Cross.*) Send her away, I wont see her. (*Sees Angie, who comes forward smiling; he changes.*) Ah! yes, what can I do for you?

ANGIE. I called in answer to your advertisement.

TOPP. (*Calming down.*) Hum! yes. (*Aside.*) Confound it, which does she mean? (*To ANGIE.*) Be seated. (*Aside.*) How shall I begin?

ANGIE. Thank you! (*Seats herself chair L.*)

TICK. (*Aside.*) Typewriter or dog fancier?

TOPP. (*Aside.*) Can't be twins. Typewriter of course. (*To ANGIE.*) May I ask, do you take readily?

ANGIE. (*Confused.*) Why, sir, I—yes—that is, my friends tell me I am very taking!

TICK. (*Aside.*) Oho!

TOPP. (*Confused. Admires her.*) I quite agree with them, but you mistake my meaning. I meant—ah—are you *rapid*?

ANGIE. (*Rising offended.*) Sir!

TICK. (*Stepping between them, L.C.*) Allow *me* to explain! She doesn't catch on.

ANGIE. (*Laughs.*) No, I don't!

TOPP. (*Brushing TICK away. Aside.*) It must be twins, then. (*To ANGIE.*) Write full particulars, give family history, etc.

TICK. And be sure to name the sire. Strain is everything in—

TOPP. You are in the presence of a lady, sir. Conduct yourself accordingly, or I shall hold you responsible. (*Pushes him aside.*)

TICK. You don't play *that* game on *me*! I'm not responsible.

TOPP. A correct observation, on my life.

TICK. (*Getting between them.*) Don't bother me. This is my customer. (*Pulls TOPP away C.*)

TOPP. What is that you say?

ANGIE. (*Puzzled.*) Goodness, me, what are they both talking about!

TOPP. (*Aside.*) There! wrong again! It *is* dogs. (*Angry.*) Madam—miss, if there is anything I—(*Stops. Aside.*) I must be civil. She's very pretty. Miss, I think you had best go home and write about them. (*Aside.*) I'll buy them and drown them.

TICK. Old Bluebeard! She's a dear little angel.

TOPP. There is my card. I'll be delighted to hear from you.

TICK. (*Aside.*) Who doubts it?

ANGIE. Thank you very much, Mr. Topp.

TOPP. Don't mention it, pray. By the way I'll take *your* address. (*Takes out note book. TICK does same.*)

ANGIE. Miss Angie Twiggs, Ferndale Park, Cottage No. 12.

TOPP. (*Writing.*) Thank you, I have it.

TICK. (*Talking unconsciously.*) Yes, I have it.

TOPP. (*Furious.*) Why, you cad, are you taking that address? Your impudence is simply amazing! I'll brain you, sir!

TICK. No you wont.

TOPP. What are you going to do with that address? I wont allow this. Give it up, sir, or I'll knock you down! (*Business of sparring.*)

ANGIE. (*Screams.*) Oh, gentlemen! Oh, oh, please don't!

TOPP. (*Desisting.*) To be sure, there is a lady present.

TICK. There is, and don't you forget it.

TOPP. Forget what, sir?

TICK. That there is a lady present, a *young* lady!

TOPP. (*Glaring at him.*) I shan't forget it. I need no lessons in manners from you, sir.

TICK. I was only going to say that fighting is rude, and—

TOPP. Have the goodness to cut short your disquisition. Now, *are* you ever going?

TICK. I'm waiting to be shown out.

TOPP. I beg pardon, so you are. Where is that Potts? (*Rings bell violently.*) A niggro is the most aggravating of all evils. I'll flog that boy.

ANGIE. (*Aside.*) What a very eccentric pair. Mr. Topp, I think I shall go. I will write you soon.

TOPP. I shall receive your missive with pleasure.

TICK. (*Aside.*) Poor innocent thing. Not if I can save her. (*Theatrically.*) I will save her!

TOPP. Eh, what's that you say?

TICK. Oh, nothing much!

TOPP. (*Bows and leads way for ANGIE, going L.*) I am delighted, Miss Twiggs—delighted with this short call. Potts will show you out in a minute.

ENTER GIN. L.

Potts, stir yourself! show this young lady out.

GIN. Yis, sah.

TOPP. And show that young man out, too. You black rascal, I told you to do that before.

GIN. Yis, sah (*Starts L. ANGIE and TICK following*).

TOPP. Hold on there a moment, Potts! Don't you know better than that? Show the young lady out *first!* (*Takes TICK by collar and pulls him back.*) Don't think you shall escape so easily. I shall hold you accountable, sir.

TICK. It's my turn to be shown out. Haven't I been waiting for an hour to be shown out?

TOPP. You don't go just yet, young man, I have use for you.

TICK. (*Goes up R.*) He recognizes me at last. My place is as good as vacant. (*Turning back.*) I am at your service, Mr. Topp.

TOPP. Very well. Now what do you mean, sir, by coming into my house in this way, poking into my letters, listening to my private affairs and taking the addresses of lady callers? This is outrageous, sir!

TICK. (*Aside.*) He doesn't know me. I'll bluff a little. (*To T.*) Do me the favor to observe that I came here on business

TOPP. Business! What is your business, pray? Why haven't you stated it an hour ago?

TICK. I never crowd a customer.

TOPP. (*Surprised.*) Customer!

TICK. I always wait till he is not busy, then I get him into a good humor—

TOPP. (*Snorting.*) Oh, you do; then let me say that I am not in a good humor.

TICK. No, your humor is bad.

TOPP. And I will have none of your attempts at witticism.

ENTER GIN. *L.*

GIN. Massa Topp, dem kids is crying fit to kill!

TOPP. Kids! What do you mean by kids?

GIN. Wy dat gemmen left two kids in de yard.

TOPP. Goats on my lawn! They'll ruin all the shrubbery. Of all things I detest a goat. First we were beset by a legion of dogs, now we are threatened with goats. This is no menagerie. Put them out at once, at once I say, before they ruin the plants.

GIN. But massa—

TOPP. Go immediately or I'll thrash you. (*Picks up paper-weight to throw. GIN exits rapidly L.*) I'll have to part with that niggro.

TICK. Old family retainer, I suppose?

TOPP. Yes, and like most heirlooms of no value whatever. He is one of the fixtures in the family along with our traditions. His grandfather was servant of my grandfather; his mother was my nurse.

TICK. It is very commendable of you, sir, to bear with his failings.

TOPP. Well, I doubt it sometimes. But as I said, he is a fixture along with our tradition of twins; twin brothers have been at the head of the firm of Topp &

Topp for three generations. When my poor brother died five years ago the line was broken. Now, alas, it is necessary to resort to *adoption*.

TICK. Very sad, sir, to see an honored old house on the verge of extinction.

ENTER GIN and SPRATT L. (*They listen.*)

TOPP. Your sentiments are very commendable, very! But, hang it, sir, you make too sure of your premise. I am on the verge, but not the verge of extinction.

TICK. What verge, then?

TOPP. (*With sudden gayety.*) My boy, it makes me so good natured to think of it, and your inquisitiveness is so very refreshing that, by Jove, I'll gratify it. I'm going to marry that young lady.

TICK. (*Aside.*) Well, he has assurance. A rival! (*To TOPP.*) I admire your taste.

TOPP. Aint I a lucky chap? Gad, I feel twenty-five. I think fifty-five is not very old, what do you say?

TICK. Not so old as seventy-five.

TOPP. (*Grows.*) Seventy-five is not in question, sir. (*To himself.*) Ah! I'm in luck. That little blonde (or brunette, as the case may be) is very pretty!

TICK. (*Aside.*) I'll head him off! (*To TOPP.*) May I suggest, sir, that your acquaintance with the young lady is rather brief.

TOPP. A fig for your suggestion. She'll come around all right. By the way, your alleged business seems to consist chiefly in poking your nose into other people's affairs. I have suggested several times that you take your leave.

TICK. (*Bowing.*) At your pleasure. I'm waiting to be shown out.

TOPP. O, to be sure! I beg pardon. I'll ring for my man. (*Starts to D. F. to pull bell. Sees GIN. and SPRATT in door.*) Potts, you there! Havn't I told you a thousand times not to stand listening?

GIN. An 'bout 'leven hundred times never to speak while other folks was talked to.

TOPP. Silence! Who is this person? (*SPRATT steps in.*)

GIN. Dat's de man wot fotched de kids.

TOPP. (*To SPRATT, with temper.*) Did you leave any kids on my lawn! sir? That is actionable. I'll prosecute you. I'll see if there's any law for making bedlam out of a quiet neighborhood, and turning objectionable animals loose on one's lawn. Potts, take away those kids.

SPRATT. (*Angrily.*) Kids? How dare you allude to Grover Cleveland Spratt and Benjamin Harrison Spratt in that way?

TOPP. Your nomenclature is ridiculous.

SPRATT. I beg to differ. Not knowing your politics, I thought I'd please you one way or the other. You can change whichever name you don't like.

TOPP. I don't like either. I am a Prohibitionist!

SPRATT. Then change both!

TOPP. Change both! I'll have them drowned, Potts, do you hear that? Drown them!

GIN. (*Starting.*) Foh de Lord's sake, Massa Topp, dat's more dan my conscience kin stan'.

SPRATT. I overlook your insult. To return to business, you advertised for them.

TOPP. What, I! Never! Take them away instanter or I'll not answer for their lives.

SPRATT. You gray-headed old monster!

TOPP. (*Enraged.*) What! Call me names in my own house.

SPRATT. Yes, and I've a mind to chastise you.

TOPP. Chastise *me!* Don't you try it. (*Feint of sparring. Catches crick in shoulder. SPRATT laughs.*) Laughing at me, you ruffian! I'm not so decrepit, sir, I'd have you understand!

SPRATT. (*Boastingly.*) I could do you in a minute.

TOPP. I am forgetting myself, you are beneath my notice. Potts, show this man out.

TICK. (*Aside.*) This is a good time for me to go and see Angie. (*Looks in note book.*) Cottage No. 3, Ferndale Park.

GIN. Beg pardon, massa, did you say *show* him out or *throw* him out?

TOPP. Either! Use your pleasure. Get rid of him.

GIN. (*To SPRATT.*) Do you see dat dooh?

SPRATT. I'll have the law on you. (*Backing out L.*)

GIN. Scoot! (*SPRATT exits just ahead of GINGER'S boot.*)

TOPP. Here's a forenoon wasted by a pack of lunatics. (*Pause.*) What does this internal tumult mean? (*Paces floor.*) It isn't the threats of that man. Bah, the braggart! I feel so light hearted. My pulse is bounding. (*Feels pulse.*) About 85. I feel the bouyancy and lightness of thirty years ago. (*Sings snatch of old song.*)

"I feel just as happy as a big sun flower,

That nods and bends in the breezes,

And my heart is as light as

The wind that blows the leaves from off the treeses."

I haven't been that way since I was forty. At thirty I was in love with every pretty face and figure. What a pretty name, *Angie*. (*Enter GIN*) And those eyes! (*GIN makes extravagant gestures of satisfaction.*) And that exquisite little mouth! And what a lovely chin—ah! the chin is an important feature. Yes, Cadwalader Topp, this is love. (*GIN makes gesture of embracing a lady.*) Old boy you have it again, same old symptoms aggravated. I'll dress at once and call on her this very day. At my age no time is to be lost. My age! Pshaw! Age does not consist in years. (*Turns suddenly, sees GIN. D. F. in act of embracing imaginary lady. Tableau.*)

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE. *House of JOSIAH TWIGGS. Cozy sitting room. Doors in 1 R. and L, window by door R and in flat. Furniture that of family in comfortable circumstances. Table near window up R., pictures, vases, etc. Discovered, Mr. and Mrs. Twiggs seated by table.*

MRS. T. Josiah, do you think there is anything in that advertisement in the *Sun*?

MR. T. Which advertisement, Sophronia? There are several hundred of them.

MRS. T. I mean the one about wealthy gentleman who wants to adopt twins. Is there anything in it?

MR. T. A tale of disappointed aspiration, probably. A gentleman, without doubt, whose taste runs to twins and who has been reduced to the necessity of advertising for them.

MRS. T. But what do you think of it?

MR. T. For my part, I don't approve of twins.

MRS. T. Don't you think he is a crank?

MR. T. Very likely! A crank is an individual whose ideas differ from yours and mine and who takes no pains to conceal the fact.

MRS. T. Do you think he's all right? (*Hands him paper.*)

MR. T. (*Looking at advertisement.*) He says high connections, honorable gentleman, etc. I guess he's what he claims to be. He must be, he says so himself.

MRS. T. The main thing is, is he *rich*?

MR. T. Yes, that's the main thing. Honor, culture, family, are minor considerations.

MRS. T. Josiah, don't be sarcastic. You always try to twist my meaning round. I'm going to have Mrs. Twiggs-Knott apply at once. It would be so nice for Twiggssie and Dixie.

MR. T. Why not try to get this estimable single party of high connections to marry one of our daughters?

MRS. T. Josiah, how you talk!

MR. T. That is a better scheme. If he takes Amelia he gets the twins thrown in, and if he takes Angie—

MRS. T. For shame, Josiah, one would think that we were scheming for our dear children.

MR. T. Oh, no! perish the thought! (*Knock at door, R.*)

MRS. T. Hist! Go to the door. (*TWIGGS opens door R.*)

ENTER MR. TOPP.

TOPP. Ah! excuse me! Is this Mr. Twiggs?

TWIGGS. Yes, come in.

TOPP. (*Embarrassed.*) I called on a little matter of business. I—that is to say—

TWIGGS. My wife, Mrs. Twiggs. (TOPP *bows to her.*) Be seated. (TOPP *takes chair by table.*) Your daughter gave me this address. (MRS. T. *seated, L.*)

MRS. T. (*Aside.*) Amelia has seen him already. (To TOPP.) Go on, sir. My daughter's friends are very welcome here.

TOPP. I told her I would call.

MRS. T. You advertised.

TOPP. (*Embarrassed.*) Don't mention that, pray.

MRS. T. Oh, I beg pardon. We can guess your errand.

TOPP. (*Aside.*) She's a mind reader.

MRS. T. You have exhibited excellent taste. Such loveliness is seldom found, I assure you.

TOPP. Yes, I quite agree. (*Aside.*) A modest family truly!

MR. T. (*Nudging his wife.*) Go slow at first.

MRS. T. At your age, sir, to be a father to budding innocence is indeed a joy.

TOPP. (*Surprised.*) A father! Yes, yes, no doubt you are right. (*Aside.*) Am I old Nestor himself, I wonder!

MRS. T. To read love in its eyes each day.

TOPP. (*Aside.*) That's better! (To MRS. T.) Delightful, madam, delightful!

MRS. T. To hear innocence lisp in stammering accents is indeed—

TOPP. Ecstatic, madam, I assure you. But I draw the line at stammering—does she stammer?

MRS. T. You mean *they*.

MR. T. (*Nudging his wife.*) He means *her*.

TOPP. I mean *she*.

MR. T. He, she, them! Who, which, what! I see!

MRS. T. He means Amelia, the mother. How sudden!

TOPP. (*Astonished.*) She a mother! .

ENTER ANGIE, R. Crosses to MRS. T., *who rises*.

MRS. T. (*Nudging T.*) A charming gentleman, I'm sure. (*To TOPP.*) My daughter, sir.

TOPP. (*Bowing.*) Ah, miss, that is to say, madam—I came—

ANGIE. (*Bows bashfully; surprised.*) Sir, I do not understand this sudden call.

TOPP. Of course not. Explanations will follow duly.

MRS. T. (*With meaning look.*) A friendly call my dear, and a little business mingled.

MR. T. Yes, business first and pleasure after.

TOPP. I dislike the word "business" but—perhaps sentiment should cut no figure in such matters. (*Aside.*) Mercenary wretches!

ANGIE. (*To TOPP.*) Then my mission has not been in vain?

TOPP. (*Graciously.*) No, indeed. I assure you though it may have originated in a mistake.

ANGIE. A mistake!

TOPP. Great events have sprung from little misunderstandings. To make a long story short, Mr. Twiggs, I have come directly to you.

MRS. T. (*Puzzled.*) To him?

TOPP. And why not to him, madam!

MRS. T. Very proper, sir. You have acted in a business-like manner. (*To TWIGGS.*) A very nice party!

TOPP. (*Aside.*) Business again! (*Down R.*)

MRS. T. (*To TWIGGS.*) Which does he want, wife or twins?

MR. T. Both!

MRS. T. Shocking! how very strange!

TOPP. Hum! as I was saying—(*To MRS. TWIGGS.*) And you, madam, since I take it you should be consulted also, where do we find ourselves? (*Pause, they all look at one another.*)

MRS. T. Proceed, sir.

MR. T. Yes, we are all ears.

TOPP. I was about to suggest that the presence of your daughter may be embarrassing.

MRS. T. Oh, never mind her. She is used to hearing all such matters discussed.

TOPP. (*Starting.*) Ah, indeed! Such matters—(*Aside.*) I don't like this. A trap—(*A pause.*)

MRS. T. Continue, my dear sir.

TOPP. Madam, I do not agree with you. I had the pleasure of seeing your daughter but once, and I wish to satisfy myself a little concerning certain matters. In short, a *private* interview is the proper thing.

MRS. T. Mercy me!—Oh, I begin to understand. He wants to talk to *you*, Josiah. How stupid you are.

MR. T. Exactly! How stupid we are.

MRS. T. What is the man driving at? (*Suddenly to TOPP.*) Who are you?

MR. T. Yes, as a mere formality it might be well to know your name.

TOPP. Since your daughter has already called on me perhaps she will do me the honor of an introduction. (*Aside.*) She's a little angel.

MRS. T. My daughter has called on you? Is this so, Angie dear?

ANGIE. Yes, mother.

MRS. T. In answer to an advertisement?

ANGIE. Yes.

MRS. T. (*Hysterically.*) Oh, rash girl! This is terrible! This is the wretch who advertised for a young lady for private secretary. (*Sarcastically.*) Tall, blonde preferred, etc., etc. (*Here describes ANGIE.*) Oh, silly child! Oh, horrid wretch! Josiah, *will* you endure this insult and never say one word or lift a hand in defense of your fireside.

MR. T. Never mind the fireside, it's all right. What does the gentleman want?

MRS. T. What does he want? he's a monster!

ANGIE. (*Remonstrating.*) Oh, mother!

TOPP. (*Astounded.*) Madam, one word—

MRS. T. (*Tragically.*) Wretch! Not a word! My poor lamb! (*Takes A. in her arms.*) Left without a protector. And the wolf is at the door.

ENTER TICK *suddenly, R.*

TICK. Wolf at the door! (*Aside.*) That's hard on me.

TWIGGS. Who the devil are you, sir, to enter my house in this unceremonious fashion?

TICK. I heard the sound of females in distress. I answered the call. Madam, your lamb shall have protection. The policy of this great free country is—

MR. T. Bosh! I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance. Who are you?

TOPP. Bless my soul, our dog-fancier again! Stick to your trade young man, and don't meddle with political economy. You had better go, sir.

MR. T. And who are you to order people out of my house. *You* had better go too.

TICK. Yes, go to —(*Waves him away with comical gesture.*)

TOPP. (*Aside.*) Ordered out of my own house! (*To TICK*) Confound it, I'll not go!

MR. T. Then I shall be obliged to eject you.

TICK. That's right, old man, throw him out. (*Crosses L. to ANGIE and MRS. T.*) Don't be afraid ladies.

MR. T. Now go will you!

TOPP. I wont!

MR. T. We'll see about that. (*Business of pushing TOPP toward door, R.*)

TOPP. Why bless me if he dosen't mean it. Well, I didn't graduate in a university for nothing. I know a little of the manly art. (*Hits TWIGGS and knocks him over table, sending books flying.*) You have a little my advantage in years (*or height, or weight, as case may be*) but you're welcome to it.

TWIGGS. (*Recovering.*) Don't come on again! My blood is up.

TOPP, Your blood! (*Knocks TWIGGS into window and breaks it.*)

MRS. T. (*Rushes between them.*) Don't hurt him, Josiah.

MR. T. Do not alarm yourself, my dear, I'll not.

TICK. (*Getting ready to hold TOPP.*) Steady boys, steady.

TOPP. (*Flinging TICK aside.*) Get out of my way.

MR. T. You have broken my window.

TOPP. *My* window, if you please, sir.

MRS. T. *Your* window?

TOPP. Yes, madam, *my* window.

MRS. T. (*Screams.*) Mercy me, it's Mr. Topp, our landlord.

MR. T. What! Mr. Topp, of Topp & Topp?

TOPP. (*With great dignity.*) Yes, sir, Cadwalader Topp, sole proprietor of Topp & Topp, oyster packers. My card, sir. (*Hands card.*) You have treated me with great indignity, sir. I shall not forget it. (*Going.*)

MR. T. All right, make a note of it, if you choose.

MRS. T. (*Pulling at TWIGGS' coat.*) Josiah, we are undone. Run and apologize.

MR. T. Apologize, never! Now, sir, (*Following TOPP.*) I challenge you to a round outside. (MRS. T. *Screams.*)

ANGIE. Mother, please be quiet.

TOPP. I'll have you up for assault and battery.

MR. T. Try it if you dare.

TICK. Three cheers for the old man.

TOPP. And what's more, you shall repair that window!

MR. T. Never!

MRS. T. Josiah, do be quiet. You are so indiscreet.

TOPP. We'll see about it. Take my word for that. You have the form of lease which reads "All repairs at expense of tenant." And now Mr. Twiggs, since you know who I am I leave you to your own reflections. (*Going R.*)

MRS. T. Please, sir, don't be hasty! This is all a mistake.

TOPP. I quite agree in that sentiment. Madam a great mistake, but not too late to mend it. (*Going R.*) I withdraw my proposal for your daughter's hand. (*Exit R.*)

MRS. T. Daughter's hand! Oh! oh! support me Jo-

siah. If you don't I *shall* faint. (*He moves to support her; pushes him off angrily.*) Josiah, follow him at once and apologize, or I shall—

ANGIE. Let the old bear go. The idea!

TICK. (*Aside.*) Good for the little one.

MRS. T. Josiah, we are undone.

MR. T. Underdone, you mean.

MRS. T. That's just like you, Josiah, to perpetrate small-beer witticisms over the misfortunes of your own family. Now you are actually laughing.

MR. T. Do you want me to cry, Sophronia?

MRS. T. No, it's a man's place to be brave and assert his rights.

MR. T. I was too brave, my dear. (*Looks at broken window, all laugh.*)

MRS. T. I shall not let him withdraw so easily. I shall write and say his proposition is considered favorably.

ANGIE. Oh, mama! How indelicate.

MRS. T. Pooh, my child, you know nothing about such matters. Even delicacy may be overdone.

ANGIE. I detest him, mama.

MRS. T. You will learn to love him. Consider it settled.

TICK. (*Aside.*) Then I am undone. (*To Mrs. T.*) Madam, your precious child has indeed escaped a wolf. He is an old mormon, or worse, I'll bet ten dollars.

MRS. T. He's worth millions.

MR. T. And yet he wont pay for that window.

MRS. T. Josiah, it is painful to think how you let sordid considerations influence your actions. You must see him and explain.

MR. T. I've nothing to explain.

ANGIE. Let the hateful old thing go.

TICK. (*Enthusiastically.*) Right you are. Let the old bear go to—

MRS. T. Husband, you *must* see him at once. This is the opportunity of a lifetime.

MR. T. I don't care to see him.

MRS. T. You are perfectly absurd to-day, Josiah.

TICK. (*Stepping forward.*) Madam, I will see him.

MRS. T. But you are a stranger, you do not understand the case.

TICK. I understand it perfectly. I shall call him to account. I will demand an apology; if he refuses, I will—by jingo, I will challenge him!

MRS. T. *No! No!* That would spoil all.

TICK. He shall not insult defenseless females while this good right arm retains its—its—ah—

ENTER SPRATT, *suddenly*, R.

SPRATT. Villain, I have found you. You shall not escape!

TICK. (*Shrinking away.*) Why, hello, partner!

SPRATT. Don't "partner" me. I'm on your track.

MR. T. (*Looks at TICK's feet.*) Not a bad sized track either! (*To TICK.*) Perhaps, you won't mind explaining why he is on your track. (*Meets TICK R. C.*)

SPRATT. That man has ruined me. The opportunity of a lifetime dashed in a moment.

MRS. T. (*Throws up hands.*) Another opportunity gone! Oh, dear! That's just what ails *us*!

MR. T. Another rumpus brewing. I'll steer them away from the window. (*Maneuvers to the other side.*)

Gentlemen, would you mind discussing this matter on the sofa?

SPRATT. You're an underhanded sneak.

TICK. You're an openhanded fraud.

MRS. T. How dreadful!

ANGIE. Rivals, I venture! How romantic! A real adventure!

SPRATT. It is no romance, I assure you. My poor twins, Grover Cleveland Spratt and Benjamin Harrison Spratt are left fatherless—no I don't mean that. They are—in short they are *left*.

TICK. Oh, he's talking about his pups.

SPRATT. (*Furious.*) If you say pups again there'll be bloodshed. I *won't* stand it.

MRS. T. (*Screams.*) Oh, dear me! Josiah, can't you do something?

MR. T. If it's a question of blood come outside. A grass plat is better to shed blood on than a carpet. We'll paint the lawn red.

SPRATT. (*Going.*) Come on!

TICK. Excuse me! (*Looks at ANGIE.*) I have an engagement here.

MRS. T. Josiah, do get rid of these horrid men.

MR. T. (*Takes TICK by arm.*) Come, sir, no vacillation. A brave man never hesitates.

TICK. Never! Do I vacillate? No, I refute the charge with indignation. I was only waiting to take leave of the ladies. (*Bowing politely.*) Ladies, au revoir. (*Exeunt men, R.*)

ANGIE. He's *so* gallant!

MRS. T. Dear me, child, what a series of adventures. And your father is so slow to act in a crisis.

ANGIE. Poor Pa! I just don't like that horrid old Topp one bit. I'll tell him so, there now!

MRS. T. Pet, you'll do nothing of the sort. Mr. Topp is such a dear man.

ANGIE. Bald as a peeled onion!

MRS. T. A mark of dignity. A patent of nobility in America.

ANGIE. A patent! Say trade mark. Why doesn't he put it on his oysters.

MRS. T. Your levity is in bad taste. Where is the dignity you inherited from your father and mother? You must learn to love him.

ANGIE. I'm not good at learning by heart. (*Aside.*) Isn't Mr. Tick handsome!

MRS. T. I'm uneasy about Josiah. He's so careless of consequences. (*Exit, R.*)

ANGIE. (*Laughs heartily*) Oh, that ridiculous old man! And he never saw me but once. (*Laughs.*)

ENTER MRS. T-K. *L.*

MRS. T-K. What are you laughing at, sister?

ANGIE. (*Laughing.*) Oh, it's too funny, I've just had a proposal!

MRS. T-K. A proposal! How romantic!

ANGIE. He's worth a million!

MRS. T-K. No! What delightful luck. Did you say *yes* instantly.

ANGIE. I did not.

MRS. T-K. Sister, don't be reckless. Do not tempt Providence, for a millionaire is a gift of Providence to a marriageable girl. Take him instanter.

ANGIE. Well, I wouldn't take him if he was worth ten millions.

MRS. T-K. Angie, are you crazy? or just a fool?

ANGIE. Just, a fool, I suppose, Amelia.

MRS. T-K. Yes, of course, young girls usually are.

ANGIE. Widows embody all wisdom, I suppose.

MRS. T-K. They at least know a good thing when they see it. I hope you didn't say no.

ANGIE. (*Laughs.*) He didn't give me any chance to say no. He and Pa had a misunderstanding and Pa told him to go.

MRS. T-K. (*Astonished.*) And he went away, offended of course. How unfortunate.

ANGIE. No, he just refused to go at all.

MRS. T-K. Refused to go! What then?

ANGIE. (*Laughing.*) He knocked Pa through the window! (*Points to broken glass.*)

MRS. T-K. Horrors! Pa is so indiscreet, but then if he is a true lover, obstacles will only fan the flame.

ANGIE. And windows prove no obstacle!

MRS. T-K. Windows, indeed! Who is he?

ANGIE. Mr. Topp, of Topp & Topp.

MRS. T-K. (*Springing up.*) What! Mr. Topp? The bachelor who wants to adopt twins?

ANGIE. The same.

MRS. T-K. And you called on him to say a good word for my darlings, Twiggsie and Dixie?

ANGIE. I did.

MRS. T-K. And you said one word for them and a dozen for yourself.

ANGIE. Now, sister, how can you? I said all I could for your boys.

MRS. T-K. Indeed! What did you say?

ANGIE. Oh, it was too funny! There was a young

gentleman there by the name of Tick, and they talked so many things that they got me all confused so I can't remember what I did say.

MRS. T-K. Artless creature!

ANGIE. (*With dignity.*) Mrs. Twiggs-Knott, may I ask what you mean by that epithet?

MRS. T-K. I mean you are greatly mistaken. It was *me* that Mr. Topp came to see.

ANGIE. *You!* Impossible! Didn't I read love in his eyes.

MRS. T-K. (*With sneer.*) Oh, if it has come to reading love in his eyes, we may consider it settled. That sort of reading can be done just as well with the eyes closed.

ANGIE. Possibly, I've had no experience.

MRS. T-K. Well, you are in a fair way to get it.

ANGIE. Spare your comments. The teacher need not be a third party.

MRS. T-K. He said he would be sure to write to me.

ANGIE. And to me, too.

MRS. T-K. He took special interest in me and said he was very, very sorry he could not do something at once, or words to that effect.

ANGIE. He took my address.

MRS. T-K. Address! That was a matter of form. He expressed great regret that he could not devote more time to my matter.

ANGIE. Expressed *regret!* (*Archly.*) Well he exhibited great pleasure at my call.

MRS. T-K. Pooh, common politeness only. For *me* it was a deep interest. I read it in his—(*Stops suddenly.*)

ANGIE. Eyes? Ha, ha ha, you are taking lessons, too, sister. Well, I called within two minutes after you

left and if his countenance expressed any sentiment it was plainly bad humor.

MRS. T-K. Which your smile immediately thawed.

ANGIE. Indeed it did.

MRS. T-K. Angie, I think you are real mean.

ANGIE. Well, sister, seriously, I don't want him, you are welcome to him.

MRS. T-K. (*Brightening.*) I *know* he called for me and, oh, such a horrid mistake. I shall die. (*Screams.*)

ENTER MRS. T. *R., running.*

MRS. T. What is it my dear!

MRS. T-K. Mr. Topp called for me instead of Angie.

MRS. T. No! You don't say. Why do you think so?

MRS. T-K. He told me that he was coming, or at least would write.

MRS. T. What a dreadful misunderstanding! We are all ruined! (*Screams.*) Josiah! Come! Quick! Where is that man?

ENTER MR. T. *hastily.*

MRS. T. Mr. Topp called for—

MR. T. Confound Topp.

MRS. T. We are ruined!

MR. T. We have been ruined so often, my dear, that I rather enjoy it.

MRS. T. Now, Josiah, don't try to be funny. When you try to be funny the effect is painful. Husband, do you realize the calamity that has befallen us?

MR. T. Yes, I guess you mean the window.

MRS. T. The window—indeed! Oh, the obtuseness of men! Mr. Topp has proposed for the hand of the wrong girl.

MR. T. No!

MRS. T. No! Is that all you can say? You never say anything but *no*.

MR. T. My dear, *no* is a very convenient little particle to calk chinks in a colloquy.

MRS. T. This can never be repaired.

MR. T. The window?

MRS. T. Don't talk eternally of that window. The match!

MR. T. Exactly! the match of course! Sophronia, I suggest we try welding. The soft solder of diplomacy may result in the union called matrimony.

MRS. T. Girls, do you hear that? Never marry a man who thinks he is funny. It is an incurable vice that breaks out at unexpected moments, to your utter confusion.

MR. T. But, ladies, I protest I am not funny.

MRS. T. We agree there.

MR. T. Can you not distinguish between a well-turned sentence and—

MRS. T. A small pun. Josiah, if you were a man of action you would do something instead of asking useless questions.

MR. T. I don't care to go into action twice in the same day.

MRS. T K. (*Groans.*) I think it's a shame!

ANGIE. It's funny.

MRS. T. (*Severely.*) So your father appears to think. What is to be done? That is the question.

MR. T. Let him change his bid and submit sealed proposals.

MRS. T. There you go again. Husband, you must see him at once.

MR. T. I'd rather not.

MRS. T. Duty and the happiness of your child call you. (*Authoritatively.*) Go!

MR. T. I prefer not to tackle him again to-day.

MRS. T. All right, I go myself. Between two evils we must choose the best. I will go.

MR. T. My dear, I won't allow it. We must choose the worst. I'll beard the—that proverb is stale—I'll just beard him. Or shall I not rather unbeard him? (*Majestically. With pompous, martial air.*) The die is cast and fortune—um—ah—

MRS. T. Josiah, go. (*Points.*)

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE. *House of Mr. TOPP as in Act I.*

ENTER GINGER, *showing in* MRS. T-K., *L.*

GIN. Massa Topp'll be in soon, I'll take your cahd.

MRS. T-K. Just say a lady.

GIN. Yes'm. (*Exit GIN. R.*)

MRS. T-K. Oh, I'm in such a state! What if Angie is right after all and Mr. Topp is in love with *her*? (*Sighs.*) Ah, well! I *did* think he admired me and then his asking me to write about dear Twiggsie and Dixie. But I just couldn't write *all* about them, they're so charming. To tell him in a confidential way will be much nicer. Pa is sure to bungle matters. Men always do. I must see Mr. Topp and make sure of this golden

opportunity for my precious boys. If he should marry, perhaps he wouldn't want to adopt twins. No, of course, not. How absurd. Oh, dear, what a complication! What shall I do?

ENTER MRS. DUBBEDAM, *R.*

MRS. D. Goot mornin' lady. You waits for sompody?

MRS. T-K. I want to see Mr. Topp.

MRS. D. Yes, peesness?

MRS. T-K. *Very* urgent business

MRS. D. Urchent! Dot will be of great importance, aint it? Mr. Topp comes sometimes home pretty guick, an' sometimes he comes later. He haf his lunch at one o'clock. What was your peesness? Some togs?

MRS. T-K. Dogs! No, indeed! I have business of great importance.

MRS. D. Togs was of much importance by some peoples. One woman brought a leetle tog under each arm. When I told her Mr. Topp would kill tem she got mat like fury an' says she, I yoost like to see him try dot.

MRS. T-K. I don't like dogs.

MRS. D. Den you yoost agree mit Mr. Topp. He can't pear mit togs an' goats an' such animals like dot.

MRS. T-K. I admire his taste! Oh, I think he is such a fine gentleman.

MRS. D. Lady, he is fine like golt. He has one heart so big as dot. (*Holds hands enclosing space to show great size.*) He treats me yoost like his mother.

MRS. T-K. Oh, go on, I love to hear you talk of him!

MRS. D. So? Well, he was gweer sometimes. He got a notion of twins?

MRS. T-K. (*With interest.*) Yes?

MRS. D. One day he say right out sudden like, "Mrs. Tuppletam, we must haf some twins." For tree days I tink about dot an' by myself I make nodings out. Dot was a Chinese puzzle. Mr. Topp he say one day he was goin' to *adopt* dem twins. Den it was all glear an' I say what a kindness in dot heart.

MRS. T-K. I could listen to you all day.

MRS. D. Ach, so? Shall you listen all day? Come in my room an' we can talk more quiet.

MRS. T-K. Thank you, I will. (*Excunt R.*)

ENTER TOPP, *L.*

TOPP. (*Solus.*) I said I'd never be a fool again, but I am. Ah! what a face! What a figure! And that smile! Yes, Topp, old boy, you're in love again for the first time in twenty years. The sensation isn't bad either. In fact, it is delightful. I feel young again. Didn't I knock that old chap out easily. Stay! that was *her* father, that was an indiscretion. I must apologize handsomely. But "the course of true love never did run smooth." I think I'm no bad match. (*DUBBLE-DAM and MRS. T-K. appear in door, R.*) My figure isn't so bad! Nor my hair! Nor my complexion, thanks to abstemious living! (*Adonis, business before glass.*) MRS. D. *knocks two or three times, R., finally enters.* MRS. T-K *in door.*) Ah, you there, Dubbledam? (*Confused.*) What do you want?

MRS. D. Eeef you please, Mr. Topp, I knock two three times already.

TOPP. Very well. What is it?

MRS. D. A lady who haf peesness important. (*DUB. retreats R.*)

TOPP. (*Adjusting articles on secretary, without looking at her.*) Some charity, I suppose. Madam I have already given all I can afford for the present.

MRS. T-K. (*Smiling.*) Pardon me, you told me to call again or write.

TOPP. (*Looks up, recognizes her, comes down C.*) Oh, so I did! (*With decision.*) But I said *write*. I have no time for interviews.

MRS. T-K. Writing is impossible. Twiggies and Dixie are *so* charming. I'm sure if you only saw them!

TOPP. (*Aside.*) Dogs again! (*Curtly.*) Madam I don't want them.

MRS. T-K. But you haven't seen them.

TOPP. I tell you I won't look at them.

MRS. T-K. But you told me to call or write!

TOPP. (*Annoyed.*) The same old story. You've called and lost valuable time and car fare. You shan't lose anything by me! (*Produces wallet.*) There's twenty dollars! (*She starts. He thrusts money in her hand.*) I'll take them! (*Calls.*) "Dubbledam." (*DUB. appears R.*) Tell Potts to drown them in the fish pond.

MRS. T-K. (*Screams.*) Drown them! Oh, sir! My precious darlings! Oh, oh!—the brute! (*About to swoon. TOPP catches her. He is greatly embarrassed.*)

TOPP. Help! Dubbledam! Here's a pretty row. And all about some puppies.

MRS. T-K. (*Suddenly recovering.*) Puppies, sir! Do you insult me? Who said dogs?

TOPP. You did, madam.

MRS. T-K. Never! I was talking about my dear, darling twin boys, Twiggies and Dixie.

TOPP. Whew! Another affair truly! (*Aside.*) A

fine woman, too! (*Begins to laugh*; MRS. T-K. and DUB-
BLEDAM *join*.) Madam, this is a most ludicrous situa-
tion. I beg your pardon.

MRS. T-K. Oh, pray don't mention it.

TOPP. I beg a thousand pardons. How ludicrous, to
be sure! Madam, I am very sorry, but I may add that
I do not think now of adopting twins!

MRS. D. Vot! No twins alretty!

TOPP. No, Dubbledam. I've changed my mind.
In short, I might as well tell you now to put the house in
order. I'm going to marry!

MRS. D. Marry! Mine cracious!

MRS. T-K. (*Starts*.) Marry! Then I suppose I may
at least—(*Embarrassed, stops*.)

TOPP. Congratulate me? Yes. The prettiest little
blonde (*or brunette, as case may be; here describe ANGIE*.)
imaginable.

MRS. T-K. (*Aside*.) Angie! she was right. (*To T*.)
I congratulate you. I—yes, I hope you'll be happy.

TOPP. Thank you. Dubbledam, show the lady out. I
wish you a very good day, madam. (*Exeunt MRS. D. and*
MRS. T-K. L.) What a ridiculous misunderstanding.
Pshaw, who cares! Love rises superior to misunder-
standings. (*Hums snatch of song*.) I'm too happy to be
annoyed at anything, and, hold on—am I too happy for
it to last? In the bright dictionary of youth—

ENTER GIN. *L.* *Showing in* MR. TWIGGS.

GIN. (*Announces*.) Mr. Twiggs.

TWIGGS. I beg pardon for the interruption. You
were speaking of the *lexicon*. Lexicon, permit me, sir,
is the better word. Nothing like it to polish up orthog-
raphy.

TOPP. (*Coming forward.*) Mr. Twiggs, I owe you an apology. That little affair at your house was highly censurable, I assure you. Do you forgive me?

TWIGGS. Of course! It *was* a little brusque, but nobody was hurt. You took me by surprise, but I'll put on the gloves with you any time that suits your convenience.

TOPP. (*Grasping his hand.*) Don't think of such a thing, sir. At your age—

TWIGGS. At my age—do you think I'm as ancient as the pyramids?

TOPP. I beg pardon! (*Confused, aside.*) I must be more guarded.

TWIGGS. All right, Topp! (*Aside.*) I'll have to play *old* man if he is to be my son-in-law.

TOPP. It is all forgotten. The hatchet is buried.

TWIGGS. (*Grasping TOPP by hand.*) My dear boy, the hatchet is in the bottom of the bay. (*They shake.*)

TOPP. Then, to proceed to the point directly. I'm a man of few words. I want to pay my addresses to your daughter.

TWIGGS. Exactly!

TOPP. It is understood?

TWIGGS. It is.

TOPP. And there is no obstacle?

TWIGGS. None that I know of.

TOPP. Thank you. Excuse my apparent haste. You were a young man yourself once.

TWIGGS. Unquestionably.

TOPP. And you can appreciate a young man's feelings.

TWIGGS. To a dot.

TOPP. Thank you. Thank you. (*Clasps his hand.*)
We can arrange details at our leisure.

TWIGGS. Yes, plenty of time for that. The details
will take care of themselves.

TOPP. The preliminaries were soon settled.

TWIGGS. Yes, though I happen to think of one pre-
liminary that might be a little clearer. Which one of my
daughters do you mean?

TOPP. (*Astonished.*) What! Which one (*Pause*)—have
you several?

TWIGGS. Only two, sir. Will you be kind enough to
specify the lady by name?

TOPP. (*Puzzled.*) Let me see! (*Looks for note book
in pocket.*) Really I can't recall her name. (*Cannot find
book.*)

TWIGGS. Ah, I see—memory not so good as formerly.
(*Aside.*) Another break; hang it!

TOPP. You are mistaken, sir, it is the confusion of
love. You said you could appreciate a lover's feelings.
(*Can't find note book.*)

TWIGGS. Of course, beg pardon. (*Aside.*) If I suc-
ceed I'll be the first on record.

TOPP. Stay, I have an idea.

TWIGGS. (*Aside.*) Returning reason. (*To T.*) Let's
have it.

TOPP. She knows.

TWIGGS. Of course, why didn't we think of that sooner.

TOPP. (*Laughs.*) Certainly! She knew it before I
did, the sly puss.

TWIGGS. But hold on! What if she won't tell? Don't
you think it would be rather embarrassing for the lady
to speak her mind first?

TOPP. Quite right you are. Now I have it, I'll describe her.

TWIGGS. That is a practical idea.

TOPP. She is tall.

TWIGGS. They are both tall.

TOPP. And good looking!

TWIGGS. (*With slight bow.*) Our family is noted, sir, for the comeliness of it's female members.

TOPP. Her smile is simply enthralling!

TWIGGS. Exactly! But allow me to remark that you are a single man and do not know the power of the female smile as a social lever, especially when a new bonnet or a new gown is its focal point. You must try again, sir.

TOPP. (*Hesitates.*) Her eye is like the gazelle's.

TWIGGS. Gad, sir, yours *is* a bad case. Allow me to suggest that you name the color of the aforesaid optic, or better still the color of her hair? By the way have you a lock of her hair?

TOPP. A lock of her hair on one day's acquaintance! (*Remonstrates.*) Oh, sir, you wrong your child.

TWIGGS. Excuse me, no offense, but a plain old father like me can't be supposed to keep tally on all the in-nings of an affair like this.

TOPP. No, of course not.

TWIGGS. Do you happen to remember the color of said hair?

TOPP. Yes, golden.

TWIGGS. Oh, yes, some call it *red*! I'll speak to Angie.

TOPP. (*Eagerly.*) Angie, that's her name.

TWIGGS. And, as lovers are usually impatient, I'll attend to the matter immediately.

TOPP. I'll be very grateful. (*They go, L.*) I'll show you out myself, sir. Good day. (*They shake hands. Exit TWIGGS, TOPP goes up R*) Well, that matter is in pretty good shape. A bad beginning makes a good ending.

ENTER GINGER, *showing in* TICK, *L.*

GIN. Mr. Tick! (*Exit GINGER, L.*)

TICK. (*Aside.*) It's risky, but I'll try it. (*To TOPP.*) Mr. Topp! (*TOPP doesn't hear.*) Mr. Topp!

TOPP. (*Turning.*) Sir?

TICK. I called in relation to a matter of mutual interest.

TOPP. You are the individual who called before and spent an hour, on pretense of business, in listening to my private affairs and reading my letters. Your interest in my affairs is altogether too great.

TICK. (*Brusquely.*) Allow me if you please, *this is* business. I come with a message from her. (*Crosses to C.*)

TOPP. From whom, pray?

TICK. You know well enough who. She declines the honor.

TOPP. Do not speak in riddles. To whom do you refer?

TICK. To Miss Twiggs, of course.

TOPP. (*Furious.*) Why you monkey, who are you? Her father has just been here. (*Getting angrier.*) You are insulting. I'll have Potts kick you down stairs. (*Rings bell.*) Where is that lazy nigger?

ENTER SPRATT *hastily followed by* GINGER, *L.*

TOPP. (*Facing TICK.*) Who are you anyway?

SPRATT. I can tell you! An imposter. Your rival who traduces you.

TOPP. (*Sneeringly.*) My rival! That man! Fiddlesticks!

SPRATT. He has traduced you, sir. He called you names. I'll leave it to Mr. Ginger.

GIN. (*Grinning.*) Yis, sah.

TOPP. What did he say, Potts? (*TICK tries to catch GINGER'S eye. Pantomime of giving coin. TOPP severely.*) Now look here, Ginger! What ails you? What did he say?

GIN. I'm tryin' to think of the word. It's powerful long. A deceptive octagon, sah, that's it.

TOPP. Eh! What's that?

GIN. A—de—um—that's what I said.

SPRATT. A decrepit octogenarian, that was the epithet.

GIN. Dat's it! A decreptive octogon—narium.

TOPP. (*To TICK.*) Why, sir, this is infamous! This is actionable. The law sir—bother the law's delays. I'll call you out, sir.

TICK. To take a drink?

TOPP. (*Thunders.*) To take a drink? No, sir. To the field of honor, sir, at thirty paces.

TICK (*Starts.*) That's a pretty small field.

TOPP. Say forty paces then, I'm not particular. I demand satisfaction.

TICK. I always try to give my customers satisfaction.

TOPP. Confound your customers. (*TICK laughs heartily.*) What are you laughing at, sir? (*TICK laughs again. Shaking his fist at TICK.*) Don't provoke me! I cannot answer for the consequences. Commercial affairs have no place in an affair of honor.

TICK. My customers tell me that frequently. (*Laughs.*)

TOPP. May the devil take your customers from first to last. (TICK *laughs immoderately*. TOPP *furious*) If you don't stop your laughing, I'll knock every tooth out of your head.

SPRATT. His conduct is very ungentlemanly.

TOPP. In the extreme! In the extreme! I can't fight *him*. He is no gentleman.

TICK. (*Aside.*) Indeed! I'll try a bluff. (*To TOPP.*) I insist on fighting.

TOPP. You insist! I'll accommodate you, sir, if the code will possibly allow it. To begin, sir, you are in trade. Old honorable house, may I ask? (TICK *laughs*.) You are laughing again, young man. To judge by your conduct the house is scarcely respectable. (TICK *laughs immoderately*. TOPP *jerks off coat*.) Now, sir, take your choice. Stop laughing or be knocked down without ceremony.

TICK. I beg pardon! My laugh goes off very easy. It's a hair-trigger laugh.

TOPP. Don't let it go off again. I warn you. Head of house or member of firm?

TICK. Neither! Traveling salesman.

TOPP. Traveling salesman! That would never do. (*To SPRATT.*) Would it?

SPRATT. Never!

TICK. But I insist!

TOPP. (*To SPRATT.*) He insists. Is there no way of accommodating him?

SPRATT. I suggest you make him give up all pretensions to the young lady and then boot him out of your house.

TICK. Boot me out of the house. Well, that's cheek enough for an office seeker, you puppy!

SPRATT. Puppy! Dare you call me puppy? I'll—
(*Makes toward TICK. TOPP prevents him.*)

TOPP. Stay, restrain your impetuosity. Your only remedy is to call him out after I have done with him. As for booting him out of the house, no gentleman could so deport himself toward another gentleman. Do you think I could stain my honor by kicking him?

SPRATT. No, it would not do. Let the nigger kick him.

TICK. Gentlemen, this waiting is a bore. (*Theatrically.*) To fight or not to fight, that's the question.

TOPP. Permit me one more question. Are you wholesale or retail?

TICK. Wholesale only.

TOPP. Ah, that is better! And your house I have no doubt *is* of high standing. Doubtless *Al* in the books? (*TICK laughs immoderately. TOPP advances furiously shaking his fist at TICK.*) Mr. Spratt, restrain me, or I *will* knock him down, in spite of the code. I see nothing to laugh at. An affair of honor is a serious affair, I'd have you understand. Perhaps this is your first.

TICK. It is.

TOPP. Then you shall have a new experience. You may consider it settled.

TICK. (*Frightened.*) Do you insist?

TOPP. Certainly, sir! Consider it settled.

TICK. But, my dear sir, all these objections—

TOPP. Are waived, sir. Choose your second. Mr. Spratt, will you favor me by arranging details on my part?

SPRATT. With pleasure!

TICK. (*Aside.*) Good Lord! I'm in for it.

TOPP. (*To TICK*) Call a friend!

TICK. Say the undertaker. I object.

TOPP. It is too late to object, sir. Choose your *second*. The undertaker will make a good *third*.

TICK. Are you trying to scare me! I can't be bluffed!

TOPP. Oh, certainly not.

TICK. I'd as soon fight as eat, but—ah—I'll be magnanimous. I'll spare you.

SPRATT. That's cool.

TOPP. Sir, this is additional provocation. I insist on fighting.

TICK. But think of the loss to your business if you should fall.

TOPP. (*Getting angry.*) Mr. Spratt hasten the details, I am anxious to teach this young man a lesson. I suggest Blackberry Hill. There is no other such spot near Baltimore. (*To TICK.*) It is a beautiful spot.

TICK. I don't doubt it.

TOPP. There I had the pleasure of acting as second for the Hon. Kidwell Kroup in his great duel with Major Brocklestein. The major winged my man first fire, but it was a beautiful affair gentlemen, beautiful. A few years later, I had the pleasure—excuse me for being personal—of meeting there myself, Col. Hicksby Snodgrass, C. S. A. And the Colonel wears only one arm since that hour.

TICK. (*Groans.*) Very cheerful, indeed!

TOPP. Delightful, I assure you. So choose your second and we'll have the whole affair over before the authorities get wind of it.

TICK. I shall be delighted to hasten matters. (*Whispers aside to GINGER.*)

TOPP. (*To SPRATT.*) Now, my dear sir, I leave all to you. Use expedition. (*To GIN.*) Show the gentlemen out. (*Exeunt SPRATT and TICK, L.*) Ah, well this may be serious after all. But it is only an incident and the true gentleman lives in an atmosphere of incidents. I'll write her. Bless her little heart, honor demands that I do and dare for her like a knight of old. (*Sits at table to write.*) "My dear Miss Twigg's"—No, that is too formal—"My dear Angie"—how does that sound?—that's a little familiar possibly for one day's acquaintance. (*Tears up sheet of paper with each change.*) How about the *my*—well I guess I'm sure enough of the *my*. But "My dear Angie" is too long. I'll try "Dear Angie." That's better, but why not make it stronger? Women feed on compliment and are taken by audacity in love. As old Horace advised I'll plunge "in medias res." So here goes: "Sweet Angie"—that's better. But that is not enough. How very inadequate language is to portray all the delightful sensations of new born love. (*Thinks.*) "Sweet Angie—"My Pet"—that's the thing—"This will inform you that I cannot see you again to-day. A little affair" (*Pause.*) *affair*—I wonder if that will alarm her? No, women admire courage—"An affair of honor requires immediate attention. Shall see you soon. May I close with a kiss?"—that's a little bold—"a sweet, sweet kiss?" There you are, that'll please her. "Au revoir and a final sweet—sweet kiss." You can't put too much of the sweet business into an affair with a young lady. You must love them distractedly, or you'll never please them. (*Sighs.*) How shall I sign it? Cadwalader Topp is too formal. I'll risk it. It sounds more affectionate.

"Caddie," that used to be my pet name. While I'm about it I'll just say "Your Caddie." There you are! (*Seals and addresses. Rings bell.*)

ENTER GIN. *R.*

GIN. Ring, sah?

TOPP. Deliver this at once. Now for the preparations. (*Strikes attitude, right hand gestures.*) Wait not when honor calls but hasten to the field, lest tardiness should prove an added stain. (*GIN stands astonished, then vanishes just as T. turns.*)

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE:—*A grass plat with trees in background.*

ENTER MR. and MRS. TWIGGS, *R. I.*

MRS. T. We must find them; blood will be shed and, oh dear! Mr. Topp may be killed!

MR. T. Sophronia, duels are not for the purpose of shedding blood. They are for the vindication of wounded honor.

MRS. T. Josiah, human life is trembling in the balance, and I believe you actually enjoy it.

MR. T. My dear, I can't say that I enjoy it so far. Our walk in search of it has been rather hurried. They should have hired a hall and sold tickets.

MRS. T. Josiah, you'll drive me to the grave. But if you do not respect the feelings of the wife of your bosom think of your child.

MR. T. Our child is all right. She is not going to fight.

MRS. T. But think of her future?

MR. T. Which future, my dear? There appears to be two of him.

MRS. T. Josiah, you stand here talking while every moment is a question of life or death.

MR. T. (*Coolly*) I'm waiting for developments, dear.

MRS. T. Developments, indeed! Do you think they will come to you? They may be in the dells.

MR. T. No, this is the right spot. All our high-class affairs occur here. Capt. Throckmugger died at the foot of that tree just over there.

MRS. T. Mercy! Josiah, how can you speak of blood! You want to kill me?

MR. T. Sophronia, dear, I disclaim—

MRS. T. (*Pulling him away.*) Come along, we must find them! To the dells! Quick! (*Exeunt, L.*)

ENTER *excitedly* ANGIE and MRS. T-K. R. I.

MRS. T-K. I'm sure I heard voices!

ANGIE. But there is nobody in sight. Sister, do you think our coming here is exactly proper?

MRS. T-K. True love dares all for duty.

ANGIE. Yes, but isn't our affection rather recent to be put to such a test.

MRS. T-K. Recent! Love knows nothing of time or place when its object is in danger.

ANGIE. It is *so* romantic. Is there really any danger?

MRS. T-K. Duels are sometimes in earnest, and Mr. Topp is a dead shot they say.

ANGIE. Horrid old thing! Poor Mr. Tick!

MRS. T-K. Dear Mr. Topp!

ANGIE. Mr. Topp is a blood-thirsty old monster. I don't like him one bit, there now!

MRS. T-K. Brave man, he is fighting for you, and thus you repay his gallantry.

ANGIE. (*Petulantly.*) I don't want him to fight for me. Oh, if Mr. Tick should be hurt.

MRS. T-K. Mr. Tick is a villain.

ANGIE. Mr. Topp is a fool; a little blood-letting would do him good.

MRS. T-K. Sister, don't mention blood, I shall expire. I know I shall. Dear me, what a snarl things are in. We must stop this duel. Dear Mr. Topp!

ANGIE. Adorable Mr. Tick!

MRS. T-K. They may have gone to the dells. Let's go there (*Exit, running L.*)

ANGIE. Wait, sister! (*Exit, following, L.*)

ENTER TICK and GINGER, R.

(*Ginger carries large pair of corn knives or, as known to farmers, "corncutters," in a gunny sack.*)

TICK. Ginger, I don't like the looks of those corncutters. How do you use them?

GIN. You jes cut an' slash, that's all. (*Business with knife.*)

TICK. But suppose old Topp gets his slash in first. Where am I?

GIN. Say, looky hyah, Mistah Tick, do you like dat gal well enough to fight fur 'er?

TICK. (*Swaggering.*) I'd die for her. I'd wade through—

GIN. Never mind de wadin'! Keep youah shoes on an' listen to Ginger Potts. Ye want to play a big bluff, don't ye?

TICK. Yes.

GIN. An' I get ten dollars if de bluff goes?

TICK. That's right.

GIN. Then you do jes as Ginger Potts tells you. If massa ever find dis job out he'll jes naterally skin me. I wouldn't have him know it fur de purtiest twenty-five dollar bill you ever see. Nosiree! Ye see, Mistah Tick, when Cadwalader Topp sees dem corncutters he'll be too mad to fight. He'll be madder'n a wet hen. He'll say dem weepsons is unnatural an' outrageous an' sich as no gentleman kin use. You got de right to choose de weepins. He raises a bushel of objections an' you insists. Den you see dah's no jewel because de gemmen can't agree on weepins. Ye's both saved yer honah an' youah hides.

TICK. That's a great scheme, Ginger. But suppose he agrees to the weapons. I don't like the looks of his eye.

GIN. (*Puzzled.*) Dat's an extreme case, but if it comes to extreemities, an' not till den min' ye, call fur me an' say you have to insult me.

TICK. Why should I insult you?

GIN. Doesn't every gentleman insult his second?

TICK. Oh, I see, *consult*.

GIN. Exactly! Dat's what I said! When ole massa sees me he'll be consulted. 'Cause ye see I'm a nigger an' a nigger aint no gentleman. He'll jes have more dignity than a pew full o' deacons and walk off consulted.

TICK. Wont that get you into trouble?

GIN. Well, ole massa'll storm 'round an' threaten to lam me, but he wont even tech me 'case massa's a gentleman an' I've been in de family three generations!

TICK. Oh you prevaricator!

GIN. A what! Say dat again. I didn't quite git dat.

TICK. You're not over twenty-five years old.

GIN. Twenty-five las fall come a year. But ye see my gran'mammy she was in de family, dat's one generation; and my mammy she was Mr. Topp's nurse, dat's two generations, ain't it? An' I was one generation, aint I?

TICK. There's no doubt of it.

GIN. All right, I ain't no great scholar, but I know three times one is three times.

TICK. All right! I hear voices. Skip into the bushes and I'll say my second is looking for a surgeon. (*Exit GIN. hastily, L.*)

ENTER MR. TOPP, SPRATT *and very dignified Surgeon, R. Latter carries case of instruments, which he leisurely unpacks, showing a very formidable saw, etc.*)

TOPP. (*To TICK.*) Ah, prompt, I see. Where is your second?

TICK. He is delayed a little looking for a surgeon. I expect him momentarily.

TOPP. That is unfortunate. Quick work here is the order. We are liable to interruption from the police. We have brought a surgeon, Dr. Short.

TICK. Let your man Spratt and Doctor Short arrange details, I'm indifferent.

TOPP. (*Haughtily.*) This is no place for a display of generosity, sir. This is very irregular and time is pressing.

SPRATT. I see no objection to stepping the ground, for example if Dr. Short will stand for Mr. Tick.

TOPP. Very irregular, very. What do you say, Dr. Short?

Dr. S. (*Very formal and dignified.*) I coincide, sir. It is highly irregular, I might add, perhaps, unprecedented. Had I the pleasure of the acquaintance of your opponent—

TOPP. (*Bowing low.*) I beg your pardon! I forget you were not acquainted! Mr. Tick, I have the pleasure of introducing Dr. Short. Dr. Short, Mr. Tick. Mr. Tick, Dr. Short. (*They bow.*)

Dr. SHORT. (*Judicially and with great dignity.*) I think I may lay it down as an axiom of the code that one gentleman *may*—I say *may*—stand at all times for any other gentleman. Now, the fact that the gentleman's second is absent looking for a surgeon must be considered a valid reason for delay and consequently *may*—I say advisedly *may*—allow slight alterations of previous plans. My decision, then, is that your humble servant might with absolute propriety—I say *might* advisedly—stand temporarily for the absent second of Mr. Tick. (*Bows to TICK.*) I am at your service, sir. I consent, to satisfy honor.

SPRATT. Very well, then let's step thirty paces! (*Business of measuring.*)

TICK. (*Chuckles aside.*) That's a safe distance.

SPRATT. Now for choice of position. Heads or tails? (*Produces coin.*)

Dr. SHORT. (*Solemnly.*) Heads.

SPRATT. (*Tossing.*) Heads it is!

SHORT. (*Tosses.*) Tails!

SPRATT. (*Tossing.*) Heads it is! Your man gets the advantage of the light. (*To TICK.*) Let us examine your weapons. Are they loaded?

TICK. (*Producing knives from sack.*) They are! (*All start at sight of knives.*)

TOPP. (*Surprised.*) What in time are those implements?

TICK. The weapons.

TOPP. Why, confound you, sir, I wont fight with a butcher's cleaver.

SPRATT. Corncutters, I beg your pardon.

TOPP. A vulgar agricultural implement. I won't fight with them.

TICK. I insist. I have the right to choose the weapons.

TOPP. But only gentlemen's weapons. I'll have you understand, sir, that I do not choose to be hacked to pieces with a sausage machine. Dr. Short, I appeal to you.

DR. SHORT. (*With great deliberation*) Your objection is reasonable, and I may add, most weighty. This uncouth weapon is unusual, and—and, *vulgar*, I use the word vulgar advisedly in the sense of *common*, without casting any reflection on this humble but useful agricultural tool.

TICK. Gentlemen, *my* second pronounces the weapons all right.

TOPP. A most remarkable second, sir! I'd like to see him. Why doesn't he appear.

TICK. I think I see him coming now. (*Hellos off R.*) Hello! Hey! Hurry up there.

ENTER GIN. R.

TOPP. (*Astonished, falls back.*) A niggro!

SPRATT. (*Repeats.*) A nigger.

DR. SHORT. (*With disgust*) A niggro. This is no place for a gentleman. (*Begins to pack his kit.*)

TICK. Isn't he a man and brother?

TOPP. (*Furious.*) This is insufferable! This is a gross insult to be atoned at once. (*Seizes one of corn knives.*) I accept the weapons! Take your place. At the word three, advance and defend yourself. I'll make shoe strings out of you, sir. (*Vehemently.*) I will, on my life I will!

SPRATT. One, two, three!

TOPP. Come on. (*Makes pass at TICK who easily eludes him. Business of TOPP chasing TICK around the stage, his movements those of a heavy, stiff man. TICK easily eludes him, and makes no effort at defense. Business, ad lib.*)

ENTER TWIGGS suddenly, R.

TWIGGS. Hello! What's this? I expected a duel and here's a sprinting match. (*Laughs heartily. Looks at TOPP.*) Why, Topp, what is that you hold in your hand? An oyster opener? (*TOPP and TWIGGS R. SHORT and SPRATT up C. TICK L, GIN behind him.*)

TOPP. Do you dare poke fun at me, sir. Don't do it again. You laugh again at your peril.

TWIGGS. Excuse me. I didn't mean to talk shop, my cachinatory muscles are subject to spasmodic movements. But what are you doing?

TOPP. (*Throws it away in disgust.*) That man had the impudence to bring a sausage knife on these hallowed precincts.

TICK. Pardon me! A corncutter!

SPRATT. No gentleman would propose a corncutter as a decent weapon.

TWIGGS. Quite right! We'll have none of them. They are perfectly absurd! Fit only for niggros. Nothing like hair triggers. (*Steps toward C.*) Has any gentleman a brace of pistols? I think I can arrange all to the satisfaction of the company.

SPRATT. (*Comes down C.*) I brought a pair for alternatives. (*Produces them from case.*)

TWIGGS. Ah, beauties!

TICK. I object to hair triggers!

TWIGGS. On what grounds, sir?

TICK. They might go off.

TWIGGS. A frivolous objection, sir! You owe Mr. Topp satisfaction. Your position is absurd, and let me say, sir, subjects you to suspicion; yes sir, to suspicion of cowardice!

TICK. (*Comes toward them, C, blusters.*) I'm no coward, mind that! (*Aside.*) This is serious. (*Aside to TWIGGS.*) I don't want to fight.

TWIGGS. (*In a friendly manner.*) Don't want to fight? What are your reasons?

TICK. I might get hurt!

TWIGGS. That's no reason!

TICK. Come aside and I'll tell you all.

TWIGGS. Publicity is the only recourse at this stage of the proceedings.

TICK. If you must then, I—I don't wish to deprive an honored house of its head.

TOPP. None of your sentiment, sir!

TWIGGS. A very commendable sentiment, but invalid.

DR. SHORT. Yes, insufficient.

TWIGGS. At this stage of the quarrel, without having satisfied wounded honor, no gentleman would ever

speak to either of you again. I advise one shot anyway.

TOPP. I insist on one shot.

TICK. I object to Mr. Topp's second. He is here through motives of revenge. I'll leave it to Dr. Short if motives of revenge are allowable in an affair of honor.

DR. SHORT. (*Emphatically.*) Never! (*To SPRATT, sternly.*) Is this true, sir? (*SPRATT silent.*)

GIN. It is. He's mad at Mistah Tick 'cause he made fun of his twins, Grover Cleveland Spratt and Benjamin Harrison Spratt.

TOPP. I recall some words now, when I come to think of it.

TWIGGS. Resign, sir, at once! Do you resign?

SPRATT. I do! (*Aside.*) They are onto my scheme.

GIN. (*To SPRATT, aside.*) Bettah git now.

SPRATT. I'll get even with you, you black rascal. (*Exit, while GIN. goes through pantomime of kicking him out.*)

TWIGGS. (*Muses.*) Hang it all, I'll act as second for both parties. How's that?

DR. SHORT. (*Gravely.*) Unusual, without precedent but *honorable*.

TWIGGS. (*Brusquely.*) Gentlemen, consider it settled! Take your places! (*They move to places. TOPP R., TICK L. TICK mechanically, as if half dazed.*) The word is one, two, three, fire. (*Thrusts pistol in hand of each and goes up C. to give signal. TICK holds his weapon very awkwardly, pointing down*) Young man, are you going to shoot a hole in the earth? (*Adjusts pistol on level for him.*)

TOPP. (*Dodging.*) I don't like that. That's partiality.

TWIGGS. Ah, possibly. (*Reflects a moment.*) Stay, I have an idea. (*Produces pistol from pocket.*) Dr. Short, favor me with your weapon. (*Takes SHORT's pistol and goes up C.*) Ready, gentlemen. Dr. Short, I'll trouble you to give the signal. The principals will kindly aim at each other and, to show strict impartiality, I'll shoot at both. (*Levels a pistol at each of the principals.*)

TOPP. (*Dodging.*) Hold on there!

TICK. (*Dodging, immediately recovering himself.*) No sir -ee! that wont do!

DR. SHORT. Extraordinary!

ENTER MRS. TWIGGS, R., runs to TWIGGS.

MRS. T. Oh, Josiah, have you found them? (*TWIGGS hastily thrusts one pistol in his pocket and tries to hide the other under his coat.*) Oh, Josiah, why don't you speak. Is anybody killed? Has blood been shed?

TWIGGS. (*Disgusted.*) Not a blamed drop! (*Aside.*) Fun all spoiled.

ENTER ANGIE and MRS. T-K., running R.

MRS. T-K. (*Running to TOPP, R.*) Oh, Mr. Topp, I implore you spare him!

ANGIE. (*Running to TICK, L.*) Spare him, Mr. Tick! Spare him!

TICK. Certainly! I can spare him! (*Puts arm round her waist.*)

TOPP. (*Furious*) Bless my eyes! Look at his audacity! I will commit murder. (*Tries to get at TICK, flourishing corncutter.* MRS. T-K. clings to him.)

MRS. T-K. You shall not! (*Tableau.*) Be merciful!

TOPP. Rash woman, let me go! My honor is at stake.

MR. T. Mr. Topp, there's a slight mistake somewhere. (*Everybody pauses for explanations, T. crosses to TOPP.*) I'll try to clear it up. You advertised for twins?

TICK. Twins! (*Makes face of surprise.*) Dogs!

MRS. T. Generous man!

TOPP. (*Annoyed.*) Madam, this is no place for a disquisition on generosity.

MRS. T. So modest! Don't deny it.

MR. T. Your advertisement brought my daughters to your house. You admired one of them, but I fear you made advances to the wrong one by mistake.

TOPP. (*Pointing to ANGIE.*) That is the young lady I meant.

MRS. T-K. But unfortunately she objects. (*Confidentially.*) I fear her affections are elsewhere. (*ANGIE cuddles up to TICK.*)

TOPP. (*Regarding ANGIE and TICK.*) Humph! Well, I shouldn't be surprised if they were. Here's a pretty state of affairs. I've made a fool of myself. Well, "There's no fool like an old fool."

MR. T. My dear Mr. Topp, a young man should not be so pessimistic. Let me match your maxim with another. "There's just as good fish in the sea as ever were caught." (*Nudges MRS. T. aside.*) How's that for a pointer?

MRS. T. Mr. Topp, let me introduce my daughter, Mrs. Twiggs-Knott. (*TOPP bows. MRS. T., Confidentially.*) She is the mother of lovely twins.

TOPP. Ah! indeed, madam? (*To MRS. T-K.*) Boys?

MRS. T-K. Fine fellows.

TOPP. Age?

MRS. T-K. Seven.

TOPP. Both the same age?

MRS. T-K. (*Confused.*) Why, to be sure.

TOPP. (*Confused.*) Yes, of course, I beg pardon!

MRS. T-K. (*Nudging Josiah.*) Confused! That's a good sign.

MR. T. Rattled!

TOPP. Healthy?

MRS. T-K. Tough as pine knots.

MR. T. (*Laughing.*) Pine knots, Twiggs-Knotts too (*Laughs at his witticism.*)

MRS. T. (*Aside.*) Josiah, your puns are atrocious. (*Twiggs goes L. C. to TICK and speaks inaudibly to him.*)

TOPP. Madam, I'll take the goods, if they're up to grade.

MRS. T-K. The goods?

TICK. Now, the old man is talking shop himself.

TOPP. I mean, I'll take the boys.

MRS. T-K. Oh, thank you! Oh, how good of him!

TOPP. Mr. Twiggs, you seem to know that young man of monumental assurance. Who is this Tick?

TWIGGS. Tick? Why, his name is not Tick. That is a nick-name the boys gave him. He is the son of my oldest friend, John Baggs. He is in the employ of Topp & Topp.

TOPP. (*To TICK*) Are you my man, Jim Baggs?

TICK. (*Bowing.*) I have that honor.

TOPP. Playing tricks on the "old man," eh? I've a mind to discharge you on the spot. Well, I wont,

come to think of it. The manager says you could sell oysters to a tobacco sign.

TICK. (*Bowing.*) Thank you!

TOPP. But I can't forgive such freaks, sir.

TICK. I'm very sorry—

TWIGGS. Yes, he's sorry. Young blood you know and none spilled either—(*All laugh.*)

MRS. T. (*Severely*) Josiah!

MR. T. Yes, my dear!

MRS. T-K. We had better go home!

TOPP. Certainly, madam. Potts! Where's that nigger?

GIN. (*Coming forward.*) Yis, sah.

TOPP. Go to the cab stand at the Park and send carriages to meet us at the fountain.

GIN. Yis, sah. (*Exit L*)

MRS. T-K. (*To TOPP.*) I do so dislike to part with my dear little boys. Only poverty—

TOPP. They shall have all the advantages of wealth.

MRS. T-K. There *may* be conditions attached to their going?

TOPP. Indeed? I thought that was all settled?

MRS. T-K. (*Sentimentally, with languishing glance.*) I should be very lonely.

TOPP. Ah, I think I understand the conditions. (*Looks at her significantly.*) The mother goes with the twins?

MRS. T-K. She *might* be induced—that is—oh, dear, how sudden! how embarrassing!

TOPP. To relieve that embarrassment, I accept the conditions.

TWIGGS. Take her, my boy! Take her, and God bless you, my children. (*Slaps TOPP on back.*)

MRS. T. Josiah, you shock me. You anticipate. This is no place for such demonstrations. *Will* you go home?

MR. T. I will. Come along. (*Seizes her arm.*)

TOPP. (*Taking arm of MRS. T-K.*) Come, dear, The house of Topp & Topp shall still keep in the line of its traditions. Twin brothers, same age. (*TICK takes ANGIE's arm. Dress stage.*)

TABLEAU:

R.

L.

SHORT, MR. TOPP, MRS. T-K., TWIGGS, MRS. T., ANGIE, TICK.

CURTAIN.

ABOUT THE PLAY.

Costumes of the day. No special make-up is needed and the only direction to be given is that each person should dress in character.

The *dialect* of GINGER is largely that of the conventional stage darky, which is absurdly unlike the real thing. It is used here for two reasons. First because it is the conventional type that people in the north expect; and second, because the real negro speech is very hard to express in print, and would be very difficult for an amateur to render with such slight study as is usual. In fact the negro dialect of the south consists largely in the peculiar *sonorous quality* of the negro voice and in the use of *quaint expressions*. To pronounce "Mas-sa" "Massy" is to fail utterly in imitating the African. It is broad and rich, *Mas'r* (*nearly*). Their grammar is frequently very good, but the penchant of the African to use high-sounding words often leads to very ludicrous results. TOPP'S TWINS will require careful *rehearsal*. Owing to the peculiar nature of the humor and the droll situations, anything like lagging will ruin the effect. The man who plays CADWALDER TOPP must not forget that he is always a gentleman, even in his anger, but he is a *genial* gentleman and not an icicle. TICK's assurance always has good nature in it, while SPRATT's is malicious. MRS. DUBBEDAM is slow, heavy and serious in all she does.

The author has endeavored to follow the old style and let the humor of the play flow continuously rather than to depend on startling climaxes for effect.

The *duel* scene may be made very effective, but it must not descend to "horse play."

PATSY O'WANG

AN IRISH FARCE WITH A CHINESE MIX-UP

BY T. S. DENISON

Author of

Odds with the Enemy. Initiating a Granger, Wanted, a Correspondent, A Family Strike, Seth Greenback, Louva, the Pauper, Hans Von Smash, Borrowing Trouble, Two Ghosts in White, The Pull-Back, Coun'ty Justice, The Assessor, The Sparkling Cup, Our Country, Irish Linen Peddler, The School Ma'am, Kansas Immigrants, An Only Daughter, Too Much of a Good Thing, Under the Laurels, Hard Cider, The Danger Signal, Wide Enough for Two, Pets of Society, Is the Editor In? The New Woman, Patsy O'Wang, Rejected, Only Cold Tea, Madam P's Beauty Parlors, Topp's Twins, A First-Class Hotel, It's all in the Pay-Streak, The Cobbler, A Dude in a Cyclone, Friday Dialogues.

Also the Novels,

The Man Behind, An Iron Crown, etc.

CHICAGO:

T. S. DENISON, PUBLISHER,

163 RANDOLPH STREET.

PATSY O'WANG.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

PATSY O' WANG, alias Chin Sum, from Hong Kong.

DR. HENRY FLUKE, who runs a sanitarium.

MIKE, from the ould sod, an assistant.

MR. BOYLER, a patient with rheumatism.

MRS. HARRIET FLUKE.

MISS SIMPER, who has a mission, a Chinese Sunday-school.

NORAH, maid of all work.

Time of Representation, thirty-five minutes.

SYNOPSIS AND HINTS TO PLAYERS.

The key to this capital farce is the remarkable transformation of which Chin Sum is capable. Born of Irish father and Chinese mother and brought up in barracks at Hong Kong he has a remarkable dual nature. Whiskey, the drink of his father, transforms him into a true Irishman, while strong tea, the beverage of his mother, has the power of restoring fully his Chinese character. Dr. Fluke employs Chin as cook, on the hearty recommendation of his old friend, Major Barker. Unfortunately for the doctor, Chin gets at the whiskey bottle through the carelessness of Mike, who, in his way is no less a character than Chin Sum himself. For the subsequent ludicrous incidents read the text of the play.

The author believes that this farce will prove one of the most popular. The extraordinary success of his previous plays, notably the farces "Hans Von Smash," "Irish Linen Peddler," and "Wide Enough for Two,"

renders this prediction a safe one. What the public wants is *humor* and *action*. In the latter feature "Patsy O'Wang" is unequalled. *Caution*, in fact, is necessary here lest the play be overdone. Excessive boisterousness and "horse play" should be carefully avoided.

This is a play that must be *well rehearsed*. It must be kept in mind that while Mike and Norah are conventional Irish with a thick brogue, Patsy (after his transformation) speaks good English with little if any brogue. In Hong Kong his associations were with officers of the British army (as servant) and naturally he acquired the language of gentlemen.

No instructions can be given here concerning the Chinese part except that the *timbre* and *tones* of the Chinese voice are very peculiar, and can be learned only by listening to Chinamen. The Chinese dialect as written here (and elsewhere in America) is at best but a poor imitation, but good enough to be funny, which is the only object in view.

COSTUMES of the day. Patsy, very thick-soled shoes (can be fixed at home), and tunic to wear outside pantaloons.

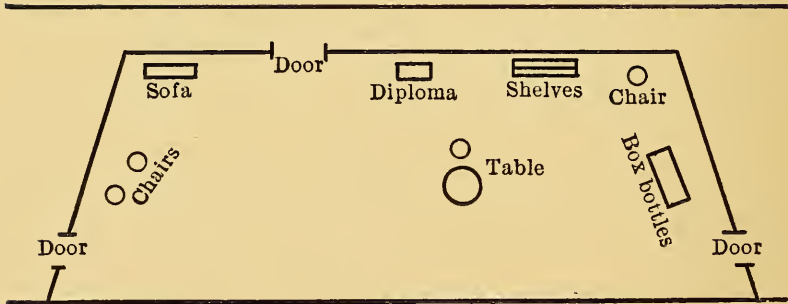
PROPERTIES.

Machine of some kind to make noise in wings; bottles in box, bottles on shelves, extra coat and shoes for office, ulster, hot-water bag and tube, funnel, cane, letter, large syringe, or other article to serve as stomach pump, tray, tea-pot, cups, plate of crackers, pigtail for Patsy, wig for Boyler.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of the stage *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *1 E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance, etc.; *D. F.*, door in flat or back of the stage. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

PATSY O'WANG.





PATSY O'WANG.

SCENE—DOCTOR FLUKE's office. *Main entrance L., private consultation room R, massage and electric room entrance D. F. R. C. Table C, with old papers and magazines. Small bookcase with books, or shelves with bottles at option, by flat L. C. Diploma on wall. Sign on door "DR. FLUKE, hours 12 to 4." Settee, R.*

MRS. F. (*Discovered as curtain arises.*) Well, Dr. Fluke, I shant take the responsibility of having a Chinaman in the house.

DR. F. My dear, don't be absurd! There's no responsibility in the case. Out in California, you know, people are charmed with Chinese cooks. Why, your sister couldn't be induced to part with Weak Lung.

MRS. F. Maria always was eccentric.

DR. F. But you know, darling, we have tried everything but the Chinese—Irish, Swede, German, French, African, Yankee—that's so as we haven't had any Hindoos yet nor Cannibal Islanders.

MRS. F. Dear me! It makes me weary to think of it. Why can't we get along with Norah?

DR. F. (*Sarcastically*) Or transform Mike into a cook.

MRS. F. Now you are absurd, Henry. I'll wash my hands of the whole affair.

DR. F. My dear, that is just what I wanted you to say.

MRS. F. Indeed, then you needn't have asked my opinion at all.

DR. F. I am sure this Patsy O'Wang is a treasure.

MRS. F. (*In astonishment.*) Patsy O'Wang! Patsy doesn't sound very Chinese.

DR. F. But he has a history.

MRS. F. Oh indeed! That's rather a doubtful accomplishment for a cook.

DR. F. Quite the contrary! Harriet, I tell you that I've found a treasure. Let me read you what Major Barker says in his letter recommending Chin Sum.

MRS. F. Chin Sum! I thought you said his name was—what barbarous name did you say?

DR. F. (*Laughing.*) Patsy O'Wang! but that's only a nick-name. The Chinese of it is Chin Sum. Now Chin is the son of a wild Irish officer in the tenth Artillery stationed formerly at Hong Kong. His mother was a pretty Chinese girl.

MRS. F. (*Surprised.*) Well, did you ever!

DR. F. My dear, I admit that there is a slight flaw in his pedigree. (*Looking at letter.*) But let me skip all that. Major Barker speaks of him in the most extravagant terms—(*reading*): "The best cook I ever saw," "the most obedient servant," "the most affectionate creature"; (*triumphantly*) isn't that enough?

MRS. F. I suppose so since apparently it is all settled.

DR. F. There's more.

MRS. F. Never mind, skip it.

DR. F. Eh, what's this? "Never under any circumstances let him taste a drop of whiskey."

MRS. F. Humph, then you'll have to keep him and Mike apart.

DR. F. (*Reads to himself.*) Really that is surprising.

MRS. F. What's surprising?

ENTER NORAH, *L.*

DR. F. Nothing, my dear (*reads*). "The remedy is"—

NORAH. If you please, sir, the Chinese cook has come.

DR. F. All right, Norah, show him his room and then take him to the kitchen. My dear will you install him?

MRS. F. No indeed! You may do that, Henry, till he gets a start. Decidedly I feel nervous with a Chinaman in the kitchen. Who knows but he may poison us all.

NORAH. (*Re-enter with card*) If you plaze, Mrs. Fluke, Miss Simper's at the dure.

MRS. F. Show her in, Norah, at once. (*Exit NORAH, L.*) Now she will be trying to convert him.

ENTER MISS SIMPER, *L.*

MRS. F. I'm delighted to see you, Miss Simper.

MISS S. Thank you! I just run in for a minute. Good morning, Dr. Fluke.

DR. F. Good morning, Miss Simper. How charming you look. That tonic benefited you greatly. Shall I change the prescription?

MISS S. (*Hastily.*) No, thank you, I have come to-day in the interest of the missionary cause.

MRS. F. Wont you step back into the parlor where we can talk at leisure?

MISS S. Oh no, I'm in a dreadful hurry. The African Argonauts meet at eleven and I preside. We start our first worker to Ashantee to-morrow. At 4 p. m. the Mongolian Mediators have a meeting and at 8 p. m. is the debate in which we shall answer the Cannibal Calumniators.

DR. F. You are a very busy bee, Miss Simper.

MISS S. No, I've resigned from the Busy Bees; concentrating you see. They say you have a new Chinese cook, Mrs. Fluke.

MRS. F. Not I. He's the doctor's importation. Talk to him.

MISS S. (*Enthusiastically.*) Oh doctor, tell me all about him. My heart bleeds for the millions of Asia who sit in outer darkness.

DR. F. My dear Miss Simper, he is a gold nugget; he will be a capital acquisition in your mission school, so intelligent, so docile, so affectionate, so— so—

MISS S. Just so. Oh, I'm perfectly delighted. Doctor, does he— ah— has he doffed the Chinese garb yet and donned the raiment of civilization?

DR. F. Blessed if I know. I'll call him in and introduce him at once. (*Rings.*)

MISS S. Do so. I was just going to ask that very favor. I'm sure he will agreeably surprise us all.

DR. F. He will. (*NORAH enters L.*) Bring Chin Sum here.

MRS. F. I hope the wretch doesn't smoke opium.

DR. F. Harriet, don't expose your ignorance. That is done in *joints*.

MRS. F. What kind of joints?

DR. F. Blessed if I know, bamboo joints possibly. I hear the Chinese do most everything with bamboo except to fight Japan. They did that in their minds.

ENTER NORAH *followed by* CHIN.

DR. F. Chin Sum, I want to introduce you to my wife; by the way, I think I will call you Patsy. Wife, our new servant Patsy O'Wang. (*MRS. F. surveys him in silence.*)

PATSY. (*Puts left hand to heart and bows.*) Velly much glad see Missee Fluke.

DR. F. And this is Miss Simper, a mission young lady.

PATSY. Vellee nice mission gull (*girl*)

MISS S. (*Blushing.*) Mr. O'Wang, you're *so* gallant. Promise me to come to Bible class next Sunday.

PATSY. Sooh thing!

MISS S. How intelligent!

PATSY. Leadee all same Biblee in Flisco?

MISS S. I don't understand him. (*Turns enquiringly to Dr*)

DR. F. Yes, Patsy, they read the same Bible as they do in Frisco.

PATSY. Sing velly nice hymn-song all same day?

DR. F. Yes!

PATSY. Chin Sum make be school boy next Sunday all same day.

DR. F. (*Looks at watch.*) Patients will be coming soon. Patsy, I'll show you the kitchen and tell you what to prepare for dinner to-day, after that Mrs. Fluke—

MRS. F. Oh dear!

MISS S. How charming! So childlike!

PATSY. (*Grins.*) All samee lika big man-shile? No catchee what say.

DR. F. Patsy, go to the kitchen, I'll be there in a minute. (*Dr. goes into office changes coat, putting on light jacket, hanging coat in office. Follows Patsy out L.*)

NORAH and MIKE heard D. F.

MRS. F. Here are the attendants getting the baths ready. Come into the house. It may be all right but I'm afraid.

MISS S. What, afraid of Chin! I shall call him Chin, poor boy. I think those Chinese names perfectly lovely. So brief, so simple, so childlike. Chin! just think! *so* expressive.

MRS. F. (*As they go, L.*) And those horrid stories of rats and opium.

MISS S. I don't believe a word of it. (*Exeunt, L.*)

ENTER MIKE and NORAH from D F.

NORAH. What do you think, Mike, of havin' a Chineese cook in the house?

MIKE. Ah Norah, it's an outrage, that's the whole blissid truth. To think of a blackgyard haythen cookin' for dacint people.

NORAH. It's a disgrace, I'll give notice, I will—

MIKE. I'll not ate a bit o' his dirthy cookin', faith I'll not.

NORAH. But what'll ye do. Them that works must eat.

MIKE. (*Winking.*) O'im all right as long as free lunches hold out.

NORAH. Free lunches ye'd better let alone, Mike.

MIKE. Norah, it's not the lunches that afficts me. It's what goes with thim.

NORAH. Last time you know, Dr. Fluke said you'd have to leave if you got drunk again.

MIKE. It's a bit o' charity the doctor needs. Ivery mon has some wakeness.

NORAH. And woman is weak too, so just carry out that box of bottles for me, I'll have to wash them here. The doctor has some of his truck in the laboratory.

MIKE. He'll be blowin' the whole place up yit with his dinnymite an' farmacopy. (*Brings out bottles and sets box L. up.*)

NORAH. Mike, ye'd better get ready for Mr. Boyler. He'll be here pretty soon for his electricity and that Englishman will want his bawth. (*NORAH washing bottles.*)

MIKE. Faith it's enough to try the patience of ould Job himself. Begob, Job never was docthor's assistant. I regret I iver intered the midical profession. Ivery toime I look at ould Boyler he sez, Mike, ye've hurt me rheumatiz again.

NORAH. Mike, you are too strong, you must be careful.

MIKE. Faith I handle him just like a new born baby, or like the egg with the chick unborn. But the ould badger's that tender I'm mortally afraid he'll go all to pieces in the bath tub.

NORAH. Mr. Boyler complains to Doctor Fluke that you are too rough.

MIKE. Too rough, is it! Faith he'll have to be packed in cotton nixt. The Docthor was after tellin' me to stretch Boyler's limbs gintly loike an' I tuk hold av his arm with one hand and his shoulther with the other like this and pulled like this, sort o' bracin' mysilf loike with one fut forinst the tub. I'm a thafe if some jint or other didn't snap like a pistol. I was so scared that I dropped the ould bundle in the wather hid over ears. I thought he was goin' to exshplode right there in me hands.

NORAH. (*Laughing.*) What did he say?

MIKE. I don't know what he intinded to say. He sthrangled.

NORAH. Why, was he under the water so long as that?

MIKE. No, indade it wasn't the wather. It was the strong language. He is that way sometimes when his emotions overcome him. When the ould sinner gets to swearin', he can't stop till he sthrangles. After that he's very paceable for a shpell.

NORAH. But he's awful good in spite of his rough ways. He gives you many a quarter.

MIKE. That he does and I couldn't think more of an only child if I had wan nor an only father ayther for that matter. I'm prayin' for him night an' day. If he survives these baths and the alectricity an' the drugs and the plasters, it'll be a great triumph of the midical profession. There he comes now, I hear his cane on the walk.

ENTER BOYLER, *L., limping and twisted with rheumatism.*

BOYLER. Good morning, Mike, good morning, Norah.

MIKE. Mornin', sir. Begob, ye're spry as a kitten this marnin'. I thought it was the milkman whin I heerd yez.

BOYLER. Mike, try to be careful to-day. You rubbed my right side yesterday till I think you started all my ribs.

NORAH. Do be gentle, Mike.

MIKE. I'll be as tender—as tender as a shpring chicken. It's alictriety, sor, to-day?

BOYLER. So it is, I forgot.

MIKE. The docthor said yez could'nt stand another bath to-day. (*Catching himself.*) I mane ye're improvin' till yez don't nade it. (*Leads B. into D. F. to operating room.*)

NORAH. (*Washing bottles.*) Such dirty bottles. The labels ain't half soaked off and the half of them look

greasy. (*Sound of machine humming.*) Boyler groans: "Oh! Mike, that's too strong."

NORAH. Poor man, I wonder if it does him any good?

ENTER PATSY O'WANG, *L.*

PATSY. Ilish gal! Monnin', Nolee.

NORAH. (*Looks up.*) What's that?

PATSY. All samee nice day.

NORAH. Go back with yez to the kitchen.

PATSY. Chin Sum want see.

ENTER MIKE *from D. F.*

MIKE. Yez want to see? All right ye shall see. That (*Points R. door.*) is the Docthor's private consultification room. Nobody but himself and patients and mimbers of the profession like meself go in there. (*B. calls "MIKE."*) Back there is the operating room. Whin yez git hurted that's where they saw yer leg off.

PATSY. (*Starting.*) What time saw leg?

MIKE. Ony toime.

PATSY. Who leg?

MIKE. Begob, onbody's if they can pay for the job. (*B. impatiently calls "MIKE, MIKE!"*)

MIKE. Comin', sor.

PATSY. (*Sees machine through door.*) What machine? All samee lope loun wheel.

MIKE. (*Scratching his head.*) I'm thinkin' it would take a Frinchman or a Dago to talk to the haythen.

PATSY. Lope loun wheel. (*Makes sign of turning.*)

MIKE. He wants to turn a bit. Begob, yez may turn awhile.

NORAH. Be careful, Mike. The doctor wouldn't like it. (*They enter D. F.*)

MIKE. (*Voice heard.*) Turn aisy loike. It's great shport. (*Patsy turns machine.*)

RE-ENTER MIKE.

NORAH. Doctor wouldn't like your letting that Chiney boy meddle here.

MIKE. I've a bit of an arrant. He may turn till I get back. (*Exit L.*)

NORAH. Worry now! These be a bad lot of bottles. (*Drops one and breaks it.*) There, I've broken one. (*B. groans* "Hold, that's too fast." PATSY *turns faster.* B. *yells* "stop." *Chinaman does not understand.* B. *screams in pain,* "stop, you scoundrel!")

NORAH. Oh dear, there they go. I knew there would be trouble. (*Calls D. L.*) "Mike, Mike, come quick. Where is the doctor? He ought to be here." (*Runs out L.*)

BOYLER. (*Gets up, and crash of chair upsetting.*) You Mongolian idiot. (*Comes out D. F.*) Where is that rascally Irishman? (*PATSY follows out, looks puzzled.*) John, you are a fool.

PATSY. (*Grins.*) My name not John. Name in Chineese Chin Sum. Melican name Patsy O'Wang.

B. Stop your chatter, you mummy, you saffron colored rat catcher! Where is that rascal of a Mike? When I get well it'll be a bad day for him. I'll murder that man yet. (*Dances around.*) How my nerves thrill, oh! oh! (*Seizes left leg and dances around on right.*) The liniment! No attendance here. I'll sue Fluke for damages. Here, you moon-faced Mongolian monkey! What are you grinning at? Do you see that bottle of liniment? (*Points with cane to bottle on shelf.*)

PATSY. Heap bottle, one time, whichee?

B. That one! bring it in and rub me. I'm on fire.

PATSY. Melican man hot like old boy; all bun up.

BOYLER. I'll die in this infernal torture chamber. (*Roars.*) Bring the bottle! (*Enters D. F. growling and holding leg.*)

PATSY. (*Takes brandy bottle, uncorks, smells.*) Um! Hong Kong blandy! make toddy likee time in Hong Kong. Dlink heap toddy. (*Takes drink, rubs stomach.*) Um! velly good

B. (*Calls.*) Hurry up, you! What on earth are you doing?

PATSY. (*Takes bottle of liniment, enters D. F. Rubs B., who gives grunts of satisfaction. PATSY runs out, takes another drink, rubs stomach, runs back again, rubs B. Business ad lib.*)

ENTER MIKE suddenly, followed by NORAH, L. *They surprise PATSY with bottle*

MIKE. Put that down, ye haythen!

PATSY. Ilishman dlunk! (*Runs back and turns handle furiously.*)

NORAH. Do ye hear that, Mike? That Chinaman's goin' to ruin the place! Oh, do stop him.

MIKE. Let the haythen airn his wages. (*Piercing shrieks from B.*)

NORAH. Oh Mike, do stop him. He'll kill Mr. Boyler.

MIKE. (*Unconcernedly.*) Faith, that's nothin'. That's the way the ould badger goes on ivery day if I only touch a bit av a sore spot. A good shakin' up 'll benefit him greatly. I think he'll be ready nixt for the bat's liver oil.

NORAH. Merciful powers! Did ye say bat's liver oil?

MIKE. Bat's liver oil, I said. (*PATSY comes out to make sneak for bottle, MIKE turns and sees him.*) Hould on there, Patsy! The docthor and meself have instituted a regular coorse (*B. yells*) "Mike, where are you?" Here, sor. (*To NORAH.*) First comes the hot bath at noinety noine degray's Farenhot, followed by pullin' the limbs, on the injy rubber plan. (*Business of stretching patient's arm.*) Nixt is the alictricity an' liniment; thin comes the bat's liver oil.

NORAH. An' what will be next?

MIKE. That's a saycret like the Kaly cure.

NORAH. Tell me wont you Mike?

MIKE. Yis, if yez wont tell onybody. (*Approaches her and puts up hand to her ear, then in very loud distinct stage whisper.*) Sand paper!

NORAH. Go 'long with yez. (*Slaps him.*)

B. (*Inside.*) Murder! Oh! oh! You infernal scoundrel. (*Great racket of B. getting out of chair. PATSY comes out flying with B. after him. They come down C. B. strikes PATSY with cane. PATSY grabs at cane and pulls B.'s wig off. Runs with it into office, R., and closes door as B. throws cane after him.*)

MIKE. Thank God he's cured! He's throwed away the cane. (*B. clutches at MIKE's throat, MIKE dodges.*) Aisy sor, aisy, ye're all right now.

B. (*Speaks with difficulty.*) You villain! My leg is on fire. (*Makes after MIKE, chases him round the table.*)

MIKE. I belave it, sor. It's a very lively leg, Mr. Boyler. (*They stop, MIKE next L., B. R. of table.*)

B. (*Trying to speak but can not for rage and excitement.*) Oh, you—you—

MIKE. Aisy sor, careful sor. Wont ye step into the office and write a bit of a tistimonial for the inshti-tootion? (*B. shakes his fist at him, speechless.*)

NORAH. Oh dear, we're all ruined. He'll tell the Doctor.

MIKE. Whist, he's stranglin' now. It is the profanity. He's often took that way. (*PATSY in office utters a loud whoop.*)

NORAH. Where *is* the Doctor. Everything's going to ruin. (*Runs out L. Another whoop in office. B. frantically rubbing lame leg.*)

MIKE. That haythen is gettin' gay. I'll tache him a lesson he won't forget soon. I'll tache him to stay in the kitchen. (*Goes toward office door.*)

B. (*Recovers speech.*) I'll have you arrested, you villain, for malpractice.

MIKE. Malpractice! What sort o' practice is that?

B. You are a pair of knaves. (*In excitement puts down lame leg.*)

MIKE. What a wonderful cure. Beautiful! I'll just kape this stick as a tistimonial.

B. None of your insolence. I'll sue Doctor Fluke

for damages, and as for you and that Chinaman, I'll have you put in jail. (*Going L.*)

MIKE. A beautiful cure, sor. Ye walk as straight as—as straight—as the moral law. Ye'd make an illegant drum-major.

B. (*Snorts.*) Drum-major! (*Going.*)

MIKE. Wont yez take yer hat, sor? (*Exit B. L. limping very little.*) Now I'll just settle with John Chinaman, bad cess to him.

ENTER PATSY suddenly from office.

PATSY. Whoopee! Feel good! Allee same day feel bully! (*Jumps from floor and kicks his wooden-soled shoes like an athlete.*)

MIKE. (*Starting back.*) Faith I think he's possissed! (*PATSY still clutches wig in left hand, seizes cane from table and jumps up again. Comes down with a whoop and makes a lightning shillelah pass at MIKE's head.*)

MIKE. The divil's in him. I'd betther call the docthor. (*Starts L. slowly at first with PATSY advancing. They keep eyes on each other and MIKE gradually gets in a panic. He suddenly darts for door just as PATSY throws an empty bottle from table at his head. Bottle breaks outside with a crash.*)

PATSY. (*Comes down C.*) It's a bad head I have! Where am I? What am I? (*Thinks a moment.*) Now I have it. I'm an Irishman again. Is this Hong Kong? No, this is America. (*Looks round.*) A doctor's shop! I was this way once before in Hong Kong when I got drunk in the barracks. Whiskey brings out the Irish in me. But they put me back. What did they give me? I can't remember. My head's all confused. (*Hands to head.*) Well, I wont be a Chinaman. I wont take a blessed drop of anything but poteen. I'll get rid of this Chinese dress. I hate it. (*Notices wig.*) Just the thing! (*Coils pig-tail up carefully on top of his head and puts on B.'s wig. Looks in hand glass that is on shelf.*) Not so bad! Old coat, I'm done with you, too.

(*Throws off Chinese tunic. Gets doctor's coat from nail inside office and puts it on. Looks in glass.*) Not so bad a fit, though a bit too long in the tails. (*Walks across stage.*) Well now, aint I good enough Irish for New York or Chicago or Cork ayther? (*Sees shoes.*) Look at the bloody shoes. (*Kicks them high in the air.*) Off with ye. Cow leather's good enough for me. (*Goes in office and comes out with doctor's shoes. Puts them on.*) Now me toilet is more to me likin'. (*Struts admiringly.*) Let that ould bear come back an' the doctor and his man. I'll thrash the whole crowd if they lay hands on me.

ENTER MRS. FLUKE, L.

MRS. F. A patient? The doctor will soon be here. Have a seat, sir. (*Notices oddity of PATSY's appearance. Starts.*) Oh! Who are you?

PATSY. Don't be alarmed, madam. I'm Patsy O'Wang. I'm the new— No, indeed, I'm *not* that.

MRS. F. The new cook, and crazy! Oh dear, I knew there'd be trouble. Oh, *why* doesn't Dr. Fluke come!

PATSY. I beg, madam, that you do not give yourself any uneasiness about the doctor. He'll soon be here, I assure you.

MRS. F. He seems harmless. I declare if he hasn't a wig! And as I live the doctor's coat on. (*Aside.*) A robber in disguise.

PATSY. Madam, you are not well. (*Politely.*) I beg you to be seated. (*Points to chair by table*)

MRS. F. He's very polite, at any rate. (*During this dialogue MRS. F. has been getting closer to door L. and at last darts out suddenly to surprise of PATSY.*)

PATSY. There's goes another! It's not much confidence the new mistress has in me. They're puttin' a job up on me. What is it they gave me before? (*Thinks.*) I'd give a thousand dollars if I could only think of it.

ENTER DR. F. L. followed by MRS. F., NORAH, MIKE, MISS SIMPER. PATSY runs into office R. and locks himself in.

MRS. F. Doctor Fluke, I told you something would happen.

DR. F. Pshaw, nothing has happened. Mike let him have whiskey.

MRS. F. I told you so. The very thing he shouldn't have had.

DR. F. I'll cure him quick enough, and Mike you are very careless.

MIKE. I'm very sorry, sor, but I didn't let him have the whiskey. Do yez think I'd be wastin' good liquor on a Chinaman?

MRS. F. But he's got it now and what will you do, I'd like to know?

DR. F. I'll just give him the remedy spoken of by Major Barker.

MRS. F. What is the remedy?

DR. F. (*Claps hand in pocket*) Where is that letter? Here's a go! (*Turns over papers on table looking for letter.*)

MRS. F. Have you lost the letter?

DR. F. It seems so. (*Business of diving his hands into his pockets.*) Oh, I have it!

MRS. F. Read it then!

DR. F. I mean, I know where it is. I changed coats.

MRS. F. And Patsy has the coat on!

DR. F. Well that is a situation!

MRS. F. (*Hysterically.*) Now he'll murder us all.

DR. F. Nonsense! Major Barker says he's the most affectionate creature.

MRS. F. Major Barker, fiddlesticks!

MISS S. I am sure the major must be right. I do think the Chinese have such lovely dispositions.

MRS. F. Miss Simper, you and the doctor fatigue me with such twaddle.

DR. F. Mike, suppose you go into the office and ask him for my coat.

MIKE. If you plaze, sor, I think my appearance excoites him a bit.

MISS S. Oh, let me go. (*Starts.*)

MRS. F. Miss Simper, are you out of your senses?
(*Pulls her back.*)

DR. F. I will go in.

MRS. F. (*Pulling him back.*) Henry, do you want to be murdered?

DR. F. (*Petulantly releasing himself.*) Let me alone.
(*Goes toward door, knocks.*) "Patsy! Patsy!"

MRS. F. Oh rash man! Henry, I know we'll all be killed in our tracks.

MISS S. Let me reason with him!

MRS. F. Oh you silly goose. Do be quiet, wont you. What *can* he be doing? (*All listen.*) It's as quiet as the grave. I'll bet he's taking poison in his desperation. Or hanging himself, may be.

MIKE. There's a noice bit o' rope on the pulley machine.

MRS. F. We'll all be killed yet, I know. Miss Simper, save yourself. (*Shoves MISS S. and NORAH out, L.*)

DR. F. Harriet, there isn't the slightest danger.

MRS. F. Dr. Fluke, why do you stand there like a post? Why *don't* you send for the police before that Chinaman does anything desperate? He is crazy and so are you.

DR. F. Humph! He's drunk!

MRS. F. He's crazy. Mike, run for the police.

DR. F. Mike, stay where you are, to assist me.

MRS. F. What *are* you going to do, Henry?

DR. F. Going into that room. (MRS. F. *throws up her hands and then suddenly lays hold of DR.'s coat tails.*) Let me alone. (*Breaking loose, raps on door; MRS. F. runs to door L. DR. calls "Patsy!" "Say! Chin Sum!" (Voice inside) "Sir." Will you let me in? (Voice answers.) "No." I don't want to arrest you. (Voice indistinctly.) I give you my word of honor. What? Yes, I'll send them all out.*)

MRS. F. Indeed, I wont go out and see you killed.

DR. F. Harriet, how could you see me killed if you

went out. (*Through door.*) Yes, I'll send them *all*. Mike go at once. Harriet, please go. He wont open the door till you all go. He is afraid we'll take him to jail.

MIKE. Sarve him good and roight, I say.

MRS. F. Yes he ought to be jailed for acting that way. (*Exit MIKE to operating room, D. F.*)

DR. F. (*Leads MRS. F. out L., she, protesting, returns to office door, R.*) Just hand my coat through the door, please. (*Door opens and coat is pushed through.*)

DR. F. Now for the remedy! (*Eagerly opens letter, reads.*) "Affectionate creature."

MRS. F. (*In door L.*) Stuff!

DR. F. Hum, "most confiding"—yes, it seems so. Oh, here it is.

MRS. F. (*Entering, eagerly.*) What is it?

DR. F. Harriet, why do you interrupt? Oh, here it is! "If he ever gets under the influence of liquor he labors under the strange delusion that he is an Irishman."

MRS. F. How absurd! He's crazy, I'd call the police.

DR. F. (*Petulantly.*) My dear, will you allow me? This is a very curious case. "The remedy is *tea*, plenty of strong *tea*." How very simple. (*Rings bell.*) I'll give him enough tea to settle him in short order.

ENTER NORAH, L.

NORAH. What is it, sor? Is he still voilent?

DR. F. Peaceful as a lamb! He wants tea.

NORAH. Tay is it! Did yez iver—

MRS. F. As well try a pinch of salt.

DR. F. Don't stand there talking, Norah. Bring the tea at once. Plenty of it! Strong! Just throw about half a pound into the tin pot and fill it with hot water.

NORAH. The tin pot houlds a gallon, sor.

DR. F. (*Impatiently.*) Will you obey orders? Go! Run! (*Exit NORAH grumbling, L.*)

MRS. F. Tea! The idea! (*Follows NORAH out L.*)

DR. F. (*Pacing floor, excitedly.*) This is a great case.

I'll write it up for the medical journals. A wonderful case—

ENTER BOYLER, *L., angry.*

B. All humbug, sir!

DR. F. What's that? Oh, it's you, Mr. Boyler.

B. At last I've found you out, Dr. Fluke!

DR. F. So it seems. Why bless me, if you aint cured. Walking without a cane!

B. Humbug! I said.

DR. F. But it's a fact!

B. You can't hoodwink me, sir. You're a charlatan!

DR. F. Don't be unreasonable!

B. Unreasonable! Oh, I *can't* stand that. (DR. *laughs.*) Gad, sir, you are actually laughing at my misfortunes. Do you call yourself a gentleman?

DR. F. Cut all that! What do you complain of? You are cured.

B. Confound your cure. You first maltreat me, outrage my feelings and then laugh at me.

DR. F. When has all this happened?

B. Every day for a month, Dr. Fluke. First you put a Hercules in the shape of a wild Irishman to rub me in the bath. He breaks every bone in my body by installments. Then he pummels me by degrees into a jelly.

DR. F. Well, what did you expect, Mr. Boyler? This isn't a kindergarten, and your rheumatism was a very obstinate case.

B. Obstinate case! Let me say, sir, you are a butcher and that Irishman is an executioner. To crown the indignity you set a crazy Chinaman to give me the electrical treatment. He runs a stream of liquid fire through my leg.

DR. F. Which cured you completely!

B. Will you let me speak, sir? When I protest, the heathen doubles the quantity. Why gad, sir, it was something terrific. I saw the constellation of Orion in broad daylight.

DR. F. Ah, it *is* a fine machine! A beauty!

B. (*Laughs.*) There you are wrong, for I smashed it to bits.

DR. F. (*Starting.*) What's that you say? My fine machine ruined? I'll have damages, Mr. Boyler.

B. Damages! I shall sue you for \$10,000 damages.

DR. F. Do it, sir, do it! It'll make my fortune. It will advertise the greatest cure of the age. Nothing like a law suit for advertising purposes. Wont you oblige me by breaking something else? Just upset those shelves, wont you? Throw my instrument case out of the window.

B. I'll not do it. I wont gratify you. A gentleman can find other ways of avenging an insult. And then there's my wig, too.

DR. F. Where?

B. Where? Do you doubt my word? (*Takes off hat and exposes shiny bald head.*) Do you see that?

DR. F. I see the head-piece but I don't see any wig.

B. (*Emphatically.*) No, sir, you don't see any wig. Your crazy Chinaman snatched it off my head and exposed me to the indignity of going home barehead in the public street.

DR. F. You shouldn't go out barehead, you may catch cold: I'll not be responsible if you disobey orders.

B. And whose fault would it be?

DR. F. Yours, of course.

B. Why, hang your assurance, Dr. Fluke.

DR. F. I disapprove of your indiscretion.

B. (*Excitedly.*) Fluke, I don't think I ever saw quite such monumental effrontery as yours. That wig cost me one hundred and fifty dollars, one of the very best make by the celebrated Toupee.

DR. F. Oh, we'll not haggle about trifles. I'll credit it on the bill for the electric machine. That cost five hundred dollars.

B. (*Gesticulating.*) Credit it on the bill! That's cool, why confound your insolence! I've a mind to cane you on the spot.

DR. F. But you can't, you see. You have no cane. You are cured.

B. (*With a roar.*) Oh, this man will put me crazy if I stay here much longer. You'll hear from me again, Dr. Fluke. You are a quack. (*Bolts toward door as—* ENTER NORA H, L., *with tray, milk jug, sugar bowl, spoons and plate of crackers. B. runs against her and sends things flying as he exits.*

NORA H. Well, did yez iver see such a cyclone! (*Commences picking up things around the stage.*)

ENTER MIKE, L., *carrying big tin teapot full of hot tea.*

MIKE. Begorra, it was lucky I was carryin' the tay pot or there'd been a Noah's flood o' tay.

NORA H. Must I get more crame, Docthor?

MIKE. It's aisy to pick that up with a spoon.

MRS. F. and MISS S. *appear timidly at door, L.*

DR. F. Bother the cream. It's the tea I want. Put the things on the table. Now I'll get him to come out.

MRS. F. Henry, do you think he'll hurt you?

MISS S. The idea! Poor abused thing!

DR. F. Clear out, you women. Do you want to frighten him? (*Exeunt MRS. F. and MISS S.*) Mike, go in the operating room to be ready for emergencies. (*MIKE enters D. F. and peeps out from time to time, as do the two ladies, L.*) Norah, you be ready to serve the tea. I'll drink some to make believe. Be cool, don't lose your head.

NORA H. (*Arranging tea things.*) Yis, sor, but I can't guarantee to kape me head if that ould cyclone blows in again.

DR. F. (*Knocks at office door.*) Patsy, come out please. It's nearly dinner time. (*Voice indistinctly inside.*) What's that? Yes, I'm all alone, that is, Norah is here, too. (*Door opens cautiously. PATSY looks out, then comes out enveloped in doctor's ulster and muffled to the ears with doctor's neckcloth. Wig frowzed till he looks*

like a fright. As he appears, heads at the other door disappear suddenly.)

DR. F. (*Starting back.*) Why Patsy, are you cold? I feel decidedly too warm.

PATSY. I think I took a bit o' cold in the cars, I'm subject to sore throat.

NORAH. (*Aside.*) Crazy as a June bug.

DR. F. Chin Sum, do you like tea?

PATSY. My name isn't Chin Sum; just Patrick O'Wang, if you please.

DR. F. What is the *O* for, Patrick?

PATSY. The *O* shows that I'm a son of me father.

DR. F. We have tea served. Sometimes we take a light refreshment an hour or so before dinner. Patsy, do you like tea?

PATSY. (*Aside.*) Tea! (*With wink.*) I'm onto their scheme. I'll take a drop, weak if you please, one lump of sugar.

DR. F. (*Is at L. of table, seats himself facing front.*) Norah, place a chair. Be seated, Patsy. You must be tired.

PATSY. Your honor I couldn't sit in your presence. (*P. is at R. of table.*)

DR. F. Very well, as you please. Norah, pour the tea. Give me a small cup. For a cold it should be drunk copiously. You had better take several cups, Patsy.

PATSY. Very well, sir, I like tea myself. (*Dr. F. chuckles to himself.* NORAH, rear of table, hands doctor a small cup then a large one to PATSY. Latter has a large hot-water bag under his ulster with rubber tube and small funnel, all found in office. The collar of the ulster must be very high and stand well forward. The funnel is held by the left hand partially enveloped in a large silk handkerchief. Under pretense of coddling his throat PATSY keeps his left hand up under his chin to keep the funnel concealed. As he drinks he turns away to R. from the doctor, back to audience, pours tea down funnel. As he hands cup

back to NORAH he thrusts his left hand beneath the ulster, the top button of which is unbuttoned. Repeat with each cup.)

DR. F. (*Sipping tea and nibbling a cracker.*) How do you like the tea, Patsy?

PATSY. (*Smacking his lips.*) It's capital tea, doctor.

DR. F. Norah, fill his cup. He wants several cups to break his cold. Then I'll put you to bed, Patsy, and give you a good sweat.

PATSY. All right, sir. (*Drinks as before.*)

DR. F. (*Aside.*) It's working! Obedient already.

NORAH. Will yez have some more tay, docthor?

DR. F. (*Impatiently.*) No, fill Patsy's cup. Don't you see it's empty. (*PATSY drinks.*) How do you feel now?

PATSY. Better already, doctor.

DR. F. Have another! There's nothing like tea. Why, it will cure every ill that flesh is heir to. Norah, fill his cup.

NORAH. I'm pourin' as fast as I can, sir. What a dale o' tea he do hold.

PATSY. (*Handing back cup.*) Very nice tea, Norah.

NORAH. I could do a dale betther with plenty o' tay and more time.

DR. F. Norah, why don't you fill his cup instead of talking. (*During this drinking the people at the door enter and look on with increasing astonishment.*) How do you feel now, Patsy?

PATSY. Much better, sir.

DR. F. Head clearer?

PATSY. Well, it's not as thick as putty an' it's not as clear as a June mornin'.

DR. F. Try a few more cups, keep it up. Norah, don't you see his cup is empty. Pour him another.

NORAH. The mon'll explode purty soon a drinkin'. He's swellin' already. (*Patsy takes cup.*)

DR. F. Hold your tongue. The charm's working finely.

NORAH. Faith it's time, the tay pot's impty.

DR. F. (*Jumping up surprised.*) Empty! Why girl it holds a gallon!

NORAH. An' he's drunk it all. The poor bye must have the stomach of an osterich or a dodo.

DR. F. Patsy, do you mean to say that you have drank a gallon of tea?

PATSY. Faith, I think it's nearer a barrel.

DR. F. And how do you feel?

PATSY. Like an irrigation canal! (*During these last speeches MRS. F., MISS S. and MIKE gather round back of table, L.*)

MRS. F. Doctor Fluke, you'll kill that man with your experiments.

MISS S. Poor dear man!

DR. F. Silence, ladies. This is a most extraordinary case! (*PATSY stands perfectly still, facing them, left hand to throat as before. Doctor takes him by the shoulder and turns him round. P. does not resist but makes a very wry face.*) A remarkable case. Why, I've hypnotized him.

MIKE. Begob, I think he's paralyzed!

MRS. F. What makes the horrid creature act so? He's got a wild look. (*PATSY rolls his eyes. Women retreat toward door.*)

NORAH. I think he's drownin', I do.

DR. F. (*Severely.*) Patsy, why don't you speak, what ails you?

PATSY. A bit o' queerness here. (*Rubs stomach with right hand.*)

DR. F. How's your head?

PATSY. Me head's all right. It's me stomach.

DR. F. Do you still imagine you are an Irishman?

PATSY. I am, sir, Irish to the bone. (*Leans forward as if pain in stomach. Rubs stomach with right hand and squirms. All this time he has been holding his throat with left hand and concealing the funnel.*)

MRS. F. Says he's Irish. He's crazy, Henry. I told you so. He'll murder us all. (*Movement of all but doctor toward doors as before.*)

NORAH. I give notice, Mrs. Fluke. I'll not live in the house with a crazy mon.

MIKE. Nayther will I. I give up me job. It will be hurtin' the profession to mix with loonytics an' Chinese.

DR. F. (*Irritated.*) Hold your tongue, Mike. This is a most extraordinary case!

MIKE. Indade it is! First he's a haythen Chinee. Then he takes a drop too much an' goes wild an' pulls the clothes aff other people and says he's an Irishman, bad luck to him. Another dram'll turn him into a Dago, I belave. I quits to-day, doctor. (*During this time PATSY'S uneasiness is increasing; finally he begins to prance round. Movement toward doors as before.*)

DR. F. Where is your pain, Patsy?

PATSY. (*Groans.*) Me stomach feels all queer like.

DR. F. (*Puts hand on P.'s stomach, starts.*) And no wonder. Why, it's hot as fire! And distended like a balloon!

MIKE. (*Nods to ladies, with wise look.*) He's dishtended!

DR. F. Mike, get the stomach pump in the office. Norah, a basin, quick! (*MIKE runs for pump. PATSY makes for door, L. Ladies scream and disappear.*)

PATSY. Faith, I'm on fire!

DR. F. (*Seizes him.*) We'll fix you in a minute.

PATSY. Aye, doctor, you've fixed me already.

DR. F. (*Holding to PATSY who struggles toward door L.*) Quick, Mike! (*MIKE reappears with pump.*)

PATSY. You'll never put that thing down my throat. (*Renews attempt to escape. FLUKE grabs at his throat and catches rubber tube. Ulster comes open. Pulls out bag of hot water and all gaze in astonishment.*)

MIKE. By the powers, you've pulled the sthomick clane out av' 'im. (*Pause.*) Is that what it looks like? I niver seed one before.

MRS. F. (*In door.*) Oh horrors!

MIKE. Hadn't yez better put it back, docthor? He may made it.

DR. F. (*Is so astonished that he holds the bag by the tube for a few seconds. Drops it in disgust.*) What does this mean, you rascal?

PATSY. (*Determinedly.*) It means you can't fill me up with tea and turn me back into a Chinaman. They did that trick in Hong Kong!

DR. F. (*Crossly.*) What are you now? Irish or Chinese?

PATSY. Irish forever.

MISS S. (*Sentimentally.*) Dear me! I'm so disappointed. I did hope we had got a real Chinaman.

DR. F. But confound you man, I hired you for a Chinaman. A bargain's a bargain.

PATSY. That bargain is off.

MIKE. (*Throws down pump.*) Then I'm aff, too. Two Irishman in wan house is wan too many.

PATSY. Keep your place, Mike, I can do better. (*All dress stage, women L., men R.*) I'm in America now, the land of opportunities. I'm goin' into politics. Me ambition is to be an alderman and die beloved and respected by all.

MIKE. Begorra, the ambition of it!

DR. F. Very well, Patsy. Since you are going to have influence let us part friends. (*They shake hands.*)

MIKE. Infloocene! Faith, I'll niver vote a shplit ticket, half Irish half Chinay.

DR. F. Patsy, you have had a strange history.

PATSY. I'll recount it if you please, doctor.

"Patsy O'Wang," *Song. Air "Pat Malloy."*

Me father was a Hooligan, me mother was Chinay
 And I was born in Hong Kong town ten thousand miles away.
 Me father was a sojer in the tenth artillere,
 He took me to the barracks there in Hong Kong by the sea.
 Me christian name was Patsy and O'Wang me name Chinay;
 An' while they all took toddy I drank nothin' but green tay.
 One day I brewed the punch meself an' then I tried the same:
 Hooray! it touched a vital spot, it lit the Irish flame.

True son of ould Hibernia, I struck for higher pay,
 I swung it like a gentleman, I drank no more green tay.
 But all good luck must have an end, there comes adversitee,
 They sent us to Ameriky ten thousand miles by sea.
 We sailed and sailed the ragin' main forever and a day,
 The boundin' ocean made us sick, they dosed us with gréen tay.
 For twenty hours or more I lay, that poison did me rack:
 I rose a haythen Chinaman, a queue hung down me back.

Me almond eyes were set askew, me queue twirled round me pate,
 They called me Chin, I made the duff and boiled the Captain's mate.
 A fool for luck the proverb says, a fool O'Wang must be,
 For now I'm turned true Irishman, bad cess to all Chinees.
 And in this free Ameriky I'll have a word to say
 I'm goin' into politics, I'll drink no more green tay.
 And for the moral of this tale I'm sure it's very plain:
 When tipples stirs your blood too much, you'd better just abstain.

*R.**L.*

MIKE, DR. F., PATSY., MRS. F., MISS S., NORAH.

CURTAIN.

REJECTED

OR

THE TRIBULATIONS OF AUTHORSHIP

A FARCE

BY T. S. DENISON

Author of "Odds with the Enemy," "Initiating a Granger," "Wanted, a Correspondent," "A Family Strike," "Seth Greenback," "Louva, the Pauper," "Hans Von Smash," "Borrowing Trouble," "Two Ghosts in White," "The Pull-Back," "Country Justice," "The Assessor," "The Sparkling Cup," "Our Country," "Irish Linen Peddler," "The School Ma'am," "Kansas Immigrants," "An Only Daughter," "Too Much of a Good Thing," "Under the Laurels," "Hard Cider," "The Danger Signal," "Wide Enough for Two," "Pets of Society," "Is the Editor In?" "The New Woman," "Patsy O'Wang," "Rejected," "Only Cold Tea," "Madam P's Beauty Parlors," "Topp's Twins," "A First-Class Hotel," "It's all in the Pay-Streak," "The Cobbler," "A Dude in a Cyclone," "Friday Dialogues."

Also the Novels,

"The Man Behind," "An Iron Crown," etc.

CHICAGO:

T. S. DENISON, PUBLISHER,

163 RANDOLPH STREET.

REJECTED.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

MR. GREATHEAD, of Greathead & Wright, Publishers.
 MR. POWERS, a tired "reader" for G. & W.
 MR. ARTHUR WELBY, a turned-down author.
 MR. RALPH HYDE-ARLINGTON, a poet. Author of "The Dead Canary," and other poems.
 MRS. UPPERDYKE FADD, a society novelist.
 SUSAN ANN BROWN, author of "Winds that Sough in the Night."
 MISS BODMAN, stenographer for G. & W.
 WILLIAM, office boy.

Time of playing, forty minutes.

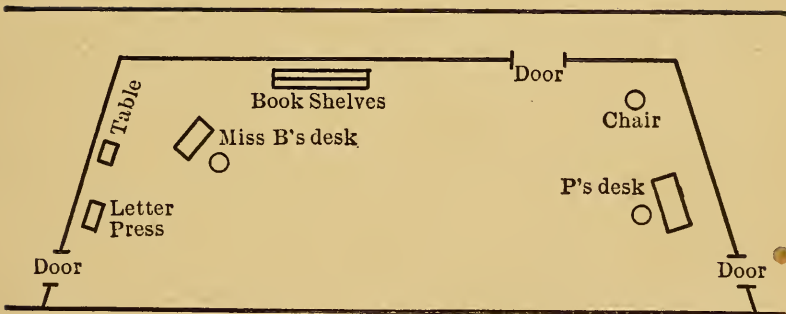
HINTS ON COSTUMES AND PLAYING.

Mr. Greathead, dignified business man, very natty business suit, silk tile, etc. Powers, plainly dressed, tired, soured man, but not boorish or coarse in any respect. Welby, rustic manners and dress but rather presentable. Hyde-Arlington, should be unusual, either very tall and ungainly or very stout and prosy looking, hair badly mussed, linen soiled, some buttons missing from coat, shoes with very best shine to contrast with seedy appearance. Droll and good natured. Mrs. Fadd, in latest style of street dress, jewels; puts on airs. Susan Ann Brown, plainly but well dressed, brusque, business like, decisive character. Miss Bodman, neat dress, suitable for office.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of the stage *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *1 E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance, etc.; *D. F.*, door in flat or back of the stage. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

REJECTED.





REJECTED.

SCENE—*Office of GREATHEAD & WRIGHT, Publishers. Discovered as curtain rises. MR. POWERS a "reader" at desk L., and MISS BODMAN, stenographer, working writing machine R. P. has large pile of MSS. before him. He moves nervously and knocks off leaves that scatter round floor. Rises impatiently.*

POWERS. (*Talking to himself aloud.*) This is simply killing. It would wear out a cast-iron man. (*Commences picking up sheets.*)

MISS B. (*Glancing round.*) He's in a bad humor this morning. Some poor author will suffer for it. (*To P.*) Found anything good, Mr. Powers?

POWERS. Such books! Such inanity. Are all the fools in the country turning authors?

MISS B. (*Laughing.*) Why, Mr. Powers, you forget you are an author yourself.

P. No, Miss Bodman, I do not forget it. Here I am, a man of genius, capable of winning the admiration of two hemispheres, who has in fact surprised the civilized world already, compelled to earn my bread by delving among the rubbish of a literary muck-heap.

MISS B. Why don't you quit that and let your own genius loose?

P. Humph! A book like my "Countess Margo, or A Romance of two Castles," has no chance of winning in this money-grubbing day. People don't know poetry, romance, pathos, and sympathy when they see it. Genius is extinguished amid the meretricious glitterings of fad literature.

MISS B. Fie, Mr. Powers, I really believe you are jealous of MRS. Upperdyke Fadd, whose last novel "Sweet Jingles Jangled" set everybody wild.

P. Miss Bodman, I hope I shall never be guilty of jealousy of Mrs. Fadd. Why, my book, "A Romance of Two Castles," is a prose idyl. It is as different from Mrs. Fadd's "Sweet Jingles Jangled" as Confucius is different from Brigham Young.

Miss B. Oh, what a comparison! I do admire your command of language!

P. Ah, thank you. You are a woman of appreciation, but the world—bah the world—(*Puts MSS. back on table.*)

Miss B. What have you found there to cross you?

P. What have I found? The same old thing—rubbish from the four quarters of the earth; drivel, nine tenths of it absolute, unqualified idiocy.

Miss B. Why, Mr. Powers, you are unusually sarcastic to-day.

P. Haven't I cause? Here I, the author of "A Romance of Two Castles," am expected to read for Great head & Wright, publishers, from two to five books per day—and oh such stuff. I'm expected to decide the fate of a book, subject to the final decision of Mr. Greathead. And I get a scoring if I reject a book that afterward succeeds with some other publisher.

Miss B. For instance, Gen. Radwell's great book.

P. Miss Bodman, that isn't a pleasant subject. How should I know that Gen. Radwell's book would be the greatest hit for a half century? Mr. Greathead stormed, and I believe if it hadn't been for Mr. Wright I should not to-day be delving in this mountain of verbiage as confidential reader and literary adviser for the great publishing house of Greathead & Wright. (*Slams down MSS. on table beside Miss B.'s desk, R. Rings bell.*) I'll tell Figgs to return that, it is all rot!

Miss B. Why, Mr. Powers, *you* are positively using slang!

P. I beg pardon, Miss Bodman, but I just couldn't help it this time. *It is rot.*

Miss B. Why, whose book is it?

P. It's another interminable manuscript from Arthur Welby. That man is a menace to society. He ought

to be incarcerated. . . . He keeps several novels on the go all the time. They have been rejected by every publisher on the continent, I believe. *He* calls himself an author.

MISS B. But pardon me. He has published *one* book.

P. Oh yes, a book's a book although there's nothing in it.

MISS B. But there is something in that one. It made me weep.

P. Yes, and it made his publisher weep too. Had to sell it for old paper at one cent a pound. (*Rings bell again.*) Where on earth is that boy!

MISS B. Well, I don't care, I liked Welby's book.

P. Oh, some people will like anything. (MISS B. *stares.*) I mean, some sloppy critic called Welby the American Dumas and that ruined him. Instead of making his books smooth and—

MISS B. And stupid!

P. No, in good form, flowing and soothing, he crams them full of stirring scenes in imitation of the old school. If I had to bring out Dumas with his sensationalism, and Dickens with his exaggerations—well they wouldn't be brought out, that's certain. (*Jabs bell viciously.*) Where *is* that boy? Asleep again I suppose.

ENTER *office boy, R.*

P. Here William, tell Figgs to return this manuscript by express, author's expense.

W. Yes, sir!

P. Welby's postage bills will ruin him. William, muss it a little, so he'll think it has been read. Be careful now. You got chewing gum between the sheets of one book and the author wrote to Mr. Greathead about it.

W. Will a few thumb prints do?

P. Goodness, no! *I* don't thumb print my books.

W. Mr. Snap does.

P. Snap! The magazine and the book departments are managed differently. Turn up a corner here and

there and displace a sheet occasionally so that when wrapped they will crease. Tell Figgs about that. (*Boy fumbling with MSS. knocks it off table and the sheets fly in every direction. In attempting to catch MSS. he overturns the dish of water used with letter press and it rolls on floor wetting some of sheets.*)

Miss. B. (*Springing aside.*) Good gracious, William!

P. Just like a boy! A boy's an animal! You've made a pretty mess of things.

W. I'm only mussin' it, sir. (*They gather up MSS., Miss. B. wiping water from skirts.*)

P. Some of it is wet, it must be carefully dried.

Miss. B. I'm afraid it'll blur badly.

P. Well, he at least cannot complain that it has never been opened. One author actually had the audacity to write that his book had never been opened.

Miss B. Had it?

P. I believe not. That joke was on Snap. They botch things in the magazine department. I am careful to open everything. No need to read it.

Miss B. How *do* you decide on the merits without reading?

P. Easy enough. There is a sort of recognized literary clique. If a book has the countersign it is read; if it comes from an outsider it is returned at once with thanks, etc. Greathead & Wright, in fact all publishers, seek people with a reputation.

Miss B. Dear me, how does an outsider get in then?

P. He doesn't get in.

Miss B. But how can an author get a reputation till he has published a book?

P. That's his affair. He can't surely expect to publish till he has the reputation.

ENTER SUSAN ANN BROWN, R. *Her manner is brusque in this scene and she talks down all opposition.*

SUSAN. Is this the office of Greathead & Wright, Publishers?

P. (*Bowing, comes down C.*) It is. What can I do for you, madam?

SUSAN. Mr. Greathead in?

P. Your name?

SUSAN. Susan Ann Brown. Is Mr. Greathead in?

P. Not at present, it's a little early.

SUSAN. Wright in?

P. (*Astonished at her manner.*) He is out of the city, madam. Can't I do something for you? Your business?

SUSAN. (*With air of contempt for his position.*) I don't think you can. I called on very important business!

P. I am here to attend to business!

SUSAN. I can't talk to clerks! I want to see one of the firm.

P. If it is an order for books, the counting room is just across the hall.

SUSAN. (*With toss of head.*) It isn't an order. I am an author. Have a novel, "Winds that Sough in the Night," 1,100 pages.

P. Madam, it is my business to take charge of manuscripts. I—

SUSAN. (*Emphatically.*) No, you don't. I've heard of your ways. Nobody but the firm will read my book.

P. But that is impossible. Our plan—

SUSAN. Is to give manuscripts to some clerk to be fumbled over. As if a ten dollar clerk was the arbiter of literature; or may be you send it out to some society woman whose husband has failed in business, as if that had fitted her to decide anything.

P. But madam, if you will allow me, we consider our readers competent.

SUSAN. And *I* think (*talks fast and emphatically but distinctly*) an author knows something about a book too, after toiling at it for months. Humph, do you suppose I've been living so long for nothing and writing all my life, too? Your plan, indeed! My book "Winds that Sough in the Night" deals with *Theosophy*. You would give that to some man who thinks *Theosophy* all a humbug. He'd laugh at it and I'd be out my postage. If my book was an exposé of *Theosophy*, you would give it to some man who believed in the thing and he'd turn it down for spite. Author out again—say, when'll Greathead be in?

P. I should say inside half an hour.

SUSAN. Which had I better see, Mr. Greathead or Mr. Wright?

P. (*Resignedly.*) Either will do.

SUSAN. Then I'll see Greathead first.

P. Have you a letter of introduction, madam?

SUSAN. Don't need any. I introduce myself. If Greathead doesn't come around to my views I'll see Wright. If he is not convinced, I'll get the two together and tell 'em what they are missing if they reject my novel. Why, it is equal to Uncle Tom's Cabin and it is longer than "Robert El Smere."

P. (*Getting impatient.*) Miss Brown, excuse me, I am very busy, will you leave a card?

SUSAN. No, I'll be back in half an hour.

P. But what shall I say?

SUSAN. Nothing. I'll do the talking. I was a book agent for five years.

P. Oh!

SUSAN. And I've been in New York before! Don't forget that. And I've sold Greathead's books. I guess I'm not afraid of him. (*Exit, R.*)

MISS B. (*Drawing long breath.*) Did you ever!

P. Regular cyclone! Electric motor, quick action.

MISS B. What will Mr. Greathead say to her?

P. Trust him. He was a life insurance agent before he was a publisher.

ENTER MR. GREATHEAD, R.

MR. G. Good morning, Powers. Good morning, Miss Bodman.

P. }
MISS B. } Good morning, Mr. Greathead.

MR. G. Mr. Powers, has the printer sent over press proofs of Mrs. Upperdyke Fadd's novel "Miss Ducie's Mistake?"

P. They are on your desk, sir.

MR. G. (*Going toward private office, D. F.*) Mr. Powers, if that man Welby calls, positively, I can not see

him. I suspect he is after me. It is in very bad taste the way he is hounding publishers.

P. Very, sir. I understand that Mr. Scooper of Scooper & Puff came pretty near ejecting him from their office yesterday.

MR. G. That would do for Scooper & Puff but not for Greathead & Wright. We aim to treat all authors with the utmost courtesy. It is business, you see

P. Exactly, I'll attend to him. I have already examined his book.

MR. G. What, already? It was only left late last evening you know.

P. I did not read it *all*. Same old thing. Harrowing scenes, sensational and low types of people.

MR. G. There's something in Welby. I confess his books interest me.

P. Yes, he persists in following the old style and strives to make his books interesting instead of easy, polished, soothing. In short, he wholly ignores good form.

MR. G. I had hopes for him once.

P. I had none. He insists in crowding his books with incidents. Admires Dumas.

P. Just so, a hopeless case! (*Exit G., D. F.*)

P. Now, Miss Bodman, let me dictate the letters to Welby and Ralph Hyde-Arlington. I'd send the printed form: "We have carefully read your valuable MS. and beg to say that our reader does not advise us to undertake its publication, etc. Thanks for esteemed favor," etc.

MISS B. And all that, taffy rejection of a MS. does not imply literary deficiency, etc.

P. I'd give that to all of them straight, but apparently Mr. Greathead has promised these two pretenders that their MSS. shall have special attention. I think Welby's got it, too. (*Laughs.*)

MISS B. Mr. Welby would like a line as to the *reason* his MS. is found unavailable, in case it is returned. Poor man! he seemed to have a presentiment of refusal.

P. Yes, apparently that is the only sane point left

in Welby. He has presentiments. He knows he is going to get it in the neck.

Miss B. Really, Mr. Powers, your language is shocking to-day.

P. I can't help it. Just think! In the last three days some score of rejected authors have been insisting on reasons, and I can't give reasons. Mr. Greathead has forbidden it.

Miss B. But don't you think an author is entitled to some consideration where his own hard labor is concerned?

P. Great Scott! If I tried to satisfy them all I'd be in an insane asylum before a month. They manage that better in the magazine department. Mr. Wright is a man of business. He has given orders to stop all authors in the vestibule, take their books away from them and show them out.

ENTER WILLIAM, *R., carrying enormous armful of MSS. in packages and envelopes. Some fall to floor. Puts them on P.'s desk. A roll remains on floor.*

P. (*Groans.*) Look at that pile, one mail!

WILLIAM. (*Aside.*) That'll make the old man sweat. (*Starts out and stumbles over roll, falls sprawling.*)

P. Look at your carelessness! Pick that up. The dunce has rolled it. The magazine department refuses to look at anything that is rolled. But I am a drudge. I *have* to do it. Greathead is too easy.

Miss B. But our letters, Mr. Powers,—

P. (*Groans.*) I'll make them short. (*Dictates.*) "Mr. Arthur Welby, Mount Hope, Ill.—You had better move to mount Despair—

Miss B. Do I take all that?

P. No, of course not. I'm talking now.

Miss B. I see.

P. There are precious few authors anywhere in America, and as for the West and especially Chicago—pah!

Miss B. I suppose the best can come only from Europe.

P. Decidedly.

Miss B. America was not big enough to produce "A Romance of Two Castles."

P. Miss Bodman, sarcasm is wasted in this office. If you do not like my book—once is sufficient to tell me. (*Spitefully.*) Of course, if you like Arthur Welby's novel, "The Man from Mattoon," you couldn't like mine. Go on please, you have the address.

Miss B. (*Tartly.*) I'm waiting to go on. (*Reads.*) "Mr. Arthur Welby, Mt. Hope, Ill."

P. Dear Sir—We have read carefully the MSS. of your very interesting story—

Miss B. What a fib!

P. Miss Bodman, you will please not interrupt—"The Governor's Daughter." We regret that it is not exactly suited to our present needs. Thanking you for the opportunity of reading your very original book we are, Very respectfully, Greathead & Wright. Now for that irrepressible poet, Mr. Ralph Hyde-Arlington.

Miss B. I hope you are not going to reject him.

P. I should say rather. Why not?

Miss B. Some of his poems are just lovely.

P. Stuff! Nothing but jingle!

Miss B. Quite the contrary. His "Lines to a Dead Canary" are full of pathos and sentiment.

P. Well, I admit that Hyde-Arlington's lines have a certain go about them suited to these times when ideas are superfluous in literature.

Miss B. (*With sentiment.*) What is your ideal of him, Mr. Powers.

P. Hum, I have no time to form ideals.

Miss B. His name is quite romantic, Ralph Hyde-Arlington.

P. Yes, it looks well on a title page.

Miss B. I think he must be tall and handsome, with dreamy eyes and dark curling locks. His sentiment is so tender. He must be an Apollo.

P. Possibly. I hope we shan't have to verify that. He's in the city now.

Miss B. I hope he'll call.

P. (*Emphatically.*) I hope he will not. You know I dread the sight of an author as I dread small pox. Now for his letter.

ENTER WILLIAM, *suddenly, R.*

WILLIAM. Mr. Welby's here again. He's kind 'o excited. (P. *jumps up. Thrusts W.'s letter into boy's hand.*)

P. Mail that immediately, William. (*To Miss B.*) Tell Welby we've written. Say anything. Get rid of him. (*Exit hastily, L.*)

ENTER WELBY, *R.*

W. I beg pardon, Miss, I just called to say that I'll be in town three or four days yet. My address is Fifth Avenue Hotel.

MISS B. Yes, sir, I'll note that.

W. (*Hesitating.*) My book was to have immediate attention. I suppose it is in hand to-day. (*Boy at door grins, holds letter, Miss B. nods to him.*)

MISS B. I think that it is—that is—oh, I remember. The house has written you.

W. (*Excitedly.*) Oh, so soon. Then they must want an interview. In that case I am at their service. I'll wait now.

MISS B. (*Perplexed.*) Oh, no—I meant (*winks at W. again*) that is you had better see the letter.

ENTER RALPH, *R.*

RALPH. Is this the office of Greathead & Wright, Publishers?

MISS B. Yes, sir, the counting room is just across the hall.

RALPH. The counting room is not what I want. I seek an interview with the firm.

MISS B. That is impossible. Mr. Wright has gone to Boston and Mr. Greathead has been very busy of late with authors.

RALPH. Then Greathead is my man, I am an author.

MISS B. (*Surprised.*) In that case I'll leave your card on his desk.

RALPH. I have no card. Poets can't afford cards. Just say Ralph Hyde-Arlington.

MISS B. (*Starts, drops note book.*) Oh! You are Mr. Ralph Hyde-Arlington!

RALPH. (*Bowing.*) I am, Miss, at your service, Ralph Hyde-Arlington, author of "The Dead Canary and Other Poems"

WELBY. (*Picking up note book.*) Allow me, miss!

MISS B. Goodness me!

WELBY. Are you ill, Miss Bodman?

MISS B. No, thank you! Just a momentary dizziness.

RALPH. How my appearance affects her! (*Looks proud.*)

MISS B. It's gone now. Allow me Mr. Arthur Welby, novelist, to introduce Mr. Ralph Hyde-Arlington, poet. (*They shake hands down C.*)

WELBY. Ah! this is a pleasure, Mr. Hyde-Arlington. My wife likes the "Dead Canary" very much.

RALPH. (*Bowing.*) Thank you! Thank you!

WELBY. In fact it is her favorite poem. By the way, of course you've read my novel, "The Man from Mattoon."

RALPH. (*Confused.*) No, I haven't. I am reserving that pleasure. It is inexcusable of me to have put off so long, for it is a work of genius. (*W. Bows.*) But you see I'm a poor man and poetry doesn't pay. We've quite a family too—nine children now.

MISS B. (*Exclaiming suddenly.*) Oh, goodness—I beg pardon, gentlemen. (*Goes up to her type-writing machine.*)

W. Really, I fear she is ill.

RALPH. (*Aside to W.*) It is our presence that affects her.

W. (*Starting.*) No.

RALPH. Sure!

W. (*To Miss B.*) Do you feel better?

MISS B. I am all right now, thank you. (*Rings bell.*) Gentlemen, I'll have you shown to the reception room where you can converse undisturbed.

W. (*To RALPH.*) I'll send you a copy of, "The Man from Mattoon."

RALPH. Thanks, I'll send you a "Dead Canary."

ENTER WILLIAM, *R.*

MISS. B. William, show these gentlemen into reception room. And ask Mr. Robinson the bookkeeper, to step here a moment. (*Exeunt, R.*) Well, I never! That man the poet, Ralph Hyde-Arlington. He looks like a junk dealer, and married and nine children! Horrors! I thought Lollie June Tibbie must be a willowy school girl, but she proves to be forty and weighs 180. Oh, the surprises of literature! Arlington's face would stop a clock.

RE-ENTER WILLIAM, *R.*

WILLIAM. Robinson says he just wont take any more poets out to lunch.

MISS B. Why?

WILLIAM. He went out with four yesterday, an' to-day he's nearly dead with dyspepsy, or whatever ye call it.

MISS B. Let the firm pay his doctor bill. I'm not here to get rid of people.

WILLIAM. He's been takin' pepsicum all day an' says he just wont do it fur nobody. (*Exit W., R.*)

ENTER MR. G. and P. *from D. F.*

P. (*Anxiously.*) Have they gone?

MISS B. No, they are in the reception room.

MR. G. Powers, I'll leave it to you. I simply can't see Mr. Welby again. This is the fifth time we have turned him down.

P. Miss Bodman has mailed him a letter, and—by the way, where did you send that letter?

MISS B. Why to the Fifth Avenue hotel of course.

P. Oh, reckless young woman! now you have done it. He'll get that letter and be back here in fifteen minutes, wanting *reasons*. The letter should have gone to Mount Despair, Illinois.

MISS B. You mean *Mount Hope*.

P. Yes, of course. Why didn't you send it to Mount Hope?

MISS B. Because you gave me his card with Fifth Avenue Hotel address.

MR. G. We'll have the bookkeeper take him to lunch.

MISS B. Robinson refuses. Says he is already dying of indigestion.

MR. G. Then it devolves on you, Powers.

P. Mr. Greathead, I have heart trouble. Send for Snap.

MR. G. (*Laughs.*) I'll put both of them in on Snap. That'll be a good joke, eh Powers?

P. Oh very funny, sir. Snap played me that trick once.

MR. G. By the way, Miss Bodman, you had better take your lunch.

MISS B. Yes, sir. (*Exit B. R.*)

MR. G. Powers, what do you think of Mr. Wilbur B. Chapter-Chapter's new novel?

P. What can you expect from Chicago?

MR. G. But Chicago has her 400 now.

P. They *think* they have.

MR. G. That amounts to the same thing. They will buy Mr. Chapter-Chapter's book solely because he is in the 400.

P. Then you will sell it chiefly on the binding?

MR. G. Certainly! The most successful books nowadays owe part of their success to the binder, just as the stage carpenter builds a play.

P. I think you are right, they have plenty of money in Chicago—and pork.

MR. G. Powers, you are prejudiced against the West. We must cater to them.

P. Very well, sir. Chapter-Chapter's book is good enough for a caterer. There's nothing in it.

MR. G. That makes no difference. Ideas make literature but paper will make books.

P. And it lacks the smooth, gum drop style of Mrs. Fadd's "Sweet Jingles Jangled."

MR. G. (*Laughs.*) Gum-drops! Powers, you are rather severe on Mrs. Fadd. We can't expect to equal

her great book more than once in a decade. The only point to be considered is this: Is Chapter-Chapter's book in good form?

P. Oh, the best. Why, he led the ball given in honor of Princess Eulalia.

MR. G. That fact alone is a capital start. We'll state it in the preface.

P. And he dedicated the Joss House erected by the Century Club to the adoration of the "Heavenly Twins."

MR. G. Enough! We will publish Chapter-Chapter's book.

P. We should have it endorsed by the Supreme Council of the New York Pow Wow.

MR. G. That is very *easy*. The secretary will write us a "Letter."

ENTER WILLIAM, R.

WILLIAM. Mr. Greathead, Mrs. Upperdyke Fadd has called.

MR. G. (*Pleased.*) Show her in, William. Powers, do your best. She likes compliment and she's the greatest writer of the time.

P. You mean *seller*, Mr. Greathead.

MR. G. Yes, yes, but do try to worship her a little, business you know.

ENTER MRS. FADD, R.

MR. G. (*Effusively.*) My dear Mrs. Fadd, this is indeed a pleasure. (*Places chair, C.*)

P. (*Bowing.*) Yes, unfortunately we see so little of authors, those wonderful people who make the world laugh or weep at their will.

MR. G. (*Tapping P.'s shoulder.*) Very neat! I couldn't have said it so well.

MRS. F. (*Dropping in chair.*) You are very kind gentlemen. But I'm here on business. How are the books selling?

MR. G. The success of your book is simply phenomenal. The sales of "Sweet Jingles Jangled" marks

an era in the book business. Presses running day and night. The name of Mrs. Upperdyke Fadd is on every tongue, club talk, society talk, street car talk—why I overheard one newsboy ask another: 'Tim wot the dickens did that Mrs. Upperdyke Fadd do?' (*All laugh.*)

MRS. F. Yes, they do talk about me. (*Laughs.*) Penalty of fame! And I am bored to death with letters from everywhere on earth about goodness knows what all, but mostly wanting subscriptions to something or other.

MR. G. The penalty of greatness, madam!

MRS. F. The only thing that I shall really push, however, is the new Infirmary for Superannuated Lap-dogs. One must concentrate nowadays. They've made me a director in that. Mrs. Wilton Schuyler Vanderzumboom is president. It is an enterprise undertaken exclusively by the most fashionable society. They are breaking their necks in the scramble to get in.

P. Who, the lap-dogs?

MRS. F. Oh dear, no, the ladies. How absurd!

MR. G. That's only a little joke of Powers'. (*Gives P. a warning look.*) It is a most commendable thing—

MRS. F. Apparently the day is past when a jest has any relation to a witticism.

MR. G. No, no, you will have your joke too, Mrs. Fadd. I mean the hospital.

MRS. F. *Infirmary*, Mr. Greathead! One is expected to do something and there are so many causes worthy of help. I hesitated between the Humane Society and the Infirmary for Superannuated Lap-dogs. Then I thought I'd better limit myself.

MR. G. By the way, Mrs. Fadd, I hope you won't let anything interfere with your contract with Greathead & Wright. Two novels per month, you know, is the agreement.

MRS. F. Pshaw! I could make it four, I really believe, I write so very easily.

MR. G. By the way, Mr. Powers, that reminds me that we ought to have Mrs. Fadd interviewed again. She hasn't been interviewed for nearly a month. Suppose we do it now and send slips to the papers at once.

P. Miss Bodman is not here.

MR. G. Couldn't you manage to take it?

P. Possibly, yes. (*Gets writing pad and seats himself at desk.*)

MR. G. The public is very much interested in celebrities just now. Napoleon you know, and Pillby. The politician held sway a long time but now the other people are falling into line. When the public hears of success, they want to know all about its possessor. The public idolize success. Now the papers are publishing portraits of dashing Board of Trade men, brilliant, brainy pork-packers, solid real estate men, smooth oil refiners, expansive gas operators.

P. I have seen a write-up of a philanthropic operator in fire sales, ten-cent counter goods, etc.; made his million of course. This is a progressive age.

MR. G. Now, Mrs. Fadd, be kind enough to answer:

Q. What kind of paper do you write on?

A. Cream laid, note size.

P. Jersey cream?

MR. G. Powers, you are getting so absent-minded. This is an interview of a literary celebrity.

Q. What sort of chair do you sit in?

A. Cane-bottomed.

Q. Straight back or curved?

A. Slightly curved.

Q. You write easily?

A. Oh very! Why, it's just dead easy. Goodness me! What did the old-fashioned author do with his time, I'd like to know. We read that they wrote and scratched out and groaned and sweat; why I can't understand it. I drop the sheets on floor with my left hand, (MR. G. "*Got that Powers? With her left hand.*") like clock work, a sheet every five minutes, twelve sheets an hour. Six thousand words per day.

MR. G. Just think of it. A most prolific pen.

P. Yes, the female pen is often very prolific.

Q. Do you have moods, Mrs. Fadd?

MRS. F. Why, as to grammar—

MR. G. I mean the other kind of moods.

A. *Moods!* no indeed, if I had moods the public would discern them. I set myself a standard of uniformity and compel myself to attain it. When I wrote "Sweet Jingles Jangled" I set myself to please. Labored efforts never please. I said there shouldn't be an idea in the book, and there isn't. The mistake of the old authors was in thinking the public wanted ideas. It does not want to be bored with ideas. It wants smooth, flowing, soothing—what shall I say?

P. Stuff.

MRS. F. No, there is a better word. (*Thinks.*) Dear me—for the present we'll say stuff, that may be read any where at any time without the possibility of exciting thought or provoking tiresome discussion. That's why the public likes Mrs. Fadd. It knows Mrs. Fadd is both safe and entertaining.

Q. Mrs. Fadd do you revise much?

A. Oh, never! I consider revision the rock on which many authors have foundered. The moment you begin to revise you break in upon that flowing smoothness which the public likes, and then your stuff doesn't appear fresh. If you revise, your work is sure to show it, and that the public resents, says you are straining after effect. Why, we read of one of the old authors who rode round town for an entire day in a half demented condition, in a cab, to the great alarm of the driver. At last throwing open the door, he jumped wildly into the street, at the risk of his neck, exclaiming: "I've got it! I've got it!" The cabman greatly relieved thought he alluded to the fare and replied! "All right, sir! Seven hours, one dollar an hour." (*All laugh.*) The author angrily replied: "You fool, I'm talking about a word I wanted. At last I've got it." Now is it any wonder that authors who drove round in cabs looking for words were always in indigent circumstances?

P. A dictionary would be cheaper.

MR. G. Decidedly! Now as to your personal life, Mrs. Fadd, the public insists on knowing those things.

MRS. F. I'm sure I don't object to telling.

Q. Do you take cream in your coffee?

A. At breakfast, not at dinner.

Q. Sugar?

A. Yes.

Q. How many lumps?

A. Two at breakfast, one at dinner.

MR. G. Note that Powers; curious eccentricity in the matter of sugar. Expand that a little.

Q. Whose soap do you use?

A. Quince's.

Q. If you only took a cigarette occasionally it would add piquancy you know; royalty does it, duchesses and all the *bizarre* people.

MRS. F. Oh, I *do* smoke a little but you really must not put that in, I—

ENTER *brusquely* SUSAN ANN BROWN, *R.*

SUSAN. Is this Mr. Greathead?

MRS. F. (*Jumping up.*) Oh dear! What if she heard! She may think I smoke a pipe. Goodness me! (*Runs out L.*)

SUSAN. Is this Mr. Greathead?

MR. G. It is madam, at your service.

SUSAN. I am Susan Ann Brown, author of "Winds that Sough in the Night," the greatest novel of the day, 1,100 pages, 300,000 words.

MR. G. To be sure. I'll introduce you to Mr. Powers our "Reader." He will examine your book.

SUSAN. I want Mr. Greathead to read it.

MR. G. That is simply impossible. Have an engagement. Mr. Powers is next to me.

SUSAN. I guess the best way is for me to call again. I'll read it to you myself.

MR. G. Eleven hundred pages! Excuse me, madam, I have an urgent engagement (*looks at watch*). Past time now! Here, Powers, attend to the lady. (*Rushes out L.*)

SUSAN. (*To P.*) So you are next to him. If *you* decide you must first hear every line, no skipping. I'll see to that myself.

P. (*Sits at his desk and commences to fumble MSS., out of humor.*) My dear madam, our plan—

SUSAN. And my plan is to do nothing half way.

P. But, Miss Brown, I really never could listen well
My ear I think—

SUSAN. I've a strong voice. I guess my way's best.
I'm a good reader. (*Pulls up chair beside him to his surprise, sits, opens M.S.*)

P. (*Groans.*) But madam, this isn't regular.

SUSAN. I've heard all about your putting off authors.
Now I'm here and I'm going to be heard.

P. Good Lord, madam—

SUSAN. Just keep cool now. If you once hear "Winds
that Sough in the Night" you'll want it. (*Reads.*)
"One evening, some thirty years ago, a solitary horse-
man was seen winding his way over the bare, snow-
clad hills as the red December sun was slowly sinking
in the western horizon. As he rode along he was im-
mersed in—

P. (*Frantically.*) The river, I hope.

SUSAN. We should get on better if you did not
anticipate, Powers.

P. Anticipate! (*Jumps and rings bell. Instantly
gong sounds outside. SUSAN jumps up in alarm, drops leaf
of M.S.*)

SUSAN. What was that? (*Gong again very loud.*)

P. Fire, madam, the place is on fire! Escape for
your life

SUSAN. Merciful heaven, and if my precious book
should be burned. Why, my book is a legacy for the
ages. (*Rushes wildly out R. hugging M.S.*)

P. (*Laughs.*) That's our last resort in self-defense.
Now may be I can do some work. (*Goes to desk and
takes up M.S.*)

RE-ENTER WELBY, R.

W. I got that letter, Mr. Powers. I hardly expected
that.

P. They never do expect it.

W. What are your reasons for rejecting my great
book, "The Governor's Daughter?"

P. Because we did not want it.

W. Sir, you are insulting.

P. Very well, abuse me if you choose. I'm only an employé. I have to be polite.

W. But has an author no rights? Must he go on forever like the Wandering Jew and never be told anything? If I were your tailor you would tell me what was the matter.

P. It costs more to put a book to press than it does a coat.

W. I could possibly fix up the book or write one that would please you.

P. I'm very sorry, Mr. Welby, but I'm only part of a vast machine and we can't give reasons for everything we do.

W. But Mr. Greathead practically promised me an interview.

P. Then see him.

W. How can I see him when he's never visible?

P. I'll call him. (*Raps, D. F.*)

ENTER G.

MR. G. (*Starts back, surprised.*) Ah, is it you, Mr. Welby?

W. Yes. May I ask something about my book?

MR. G. Why, really it's against our rules but, Powers, suppose you take Mr. Welby out to lunch and talk with him.

W. I much prefer to see you, sir. I agree not to bore you.

MR. G. (*Gets hat.*) Then suppose you do me the honor of lunching with me at the Club.

W. With pleasure. (*Exeunt, R.*)

P. (*Dropping in chair.*) I shall have softening of the brain, I know it, I feel it coming on.

ENTER RALPH, R.

RALPH. Mr. Greathead in yet?

P. No.

RALPH. I've been waiting in the reception room two hours.

P. I'm very sorry.

RALPH. Where is he? I'll follow him all over New York.

P. (*Wearily.*) Gone to lunch with Mr. Welby.

RALPH. Welby, ha! Welby is taking advantage of me. Why didn't I invite Mr. Greathead to lunch with me. (*Runs fingers through hair, assumes dignified air which is very comical.*) May be I'm not so well dressed as Welby, but clothes have nothing to do with literature.

P. But they do with books.

RALPH. A fine distinction. Mrs. Fadd wears good clothes. Mr. Powers, while we are all alone, suppose I just read you a few poems from my new volume, "The Pith Soldier, and Other Poems?" They far surpass the "Dead Canary." You'll want them.

P. Mr. Hyde-Arlington, we never do that. It's against the rules.

RALPH. I mean just in an informal way between ourselves. You know the success attained by my "Dead Canary."

P. Impossible, my dear sir. The building may take fire.

RALPH. (*Starting.*) Fire! What's that you said?

P. I mean—go on sir. (*R. begins unwrapping package.*)

P. (*Aside.*) I'll try the fire alarm. (*Before he can ring bell*)—

ENTER, *R. hastily*, SUSAN.

SUSAN. Young man, that was a false alarm. There wasn't any fire.

RALPH. Fire! No, my poetry is not as hot as Mrs. Wheelwright's.

SUSAN. (*Ignores R.*) I lost a page of my book. I couldn't lose the least bit of it for the world. It is my heart's blood, drop by drop—oh, there it is! (*Picks page under chair.*) Oh, how I've worked on that book, I've burned for hours the midnight oil with aching head and ceaseless toil. There! I didn't mean to make poetry.

RALPH. (*Sarcastically.*) You haven't made any.

SUSAN. (*With withering glance.*) Who are you, I'd like to know?

RALPH. I am Ralph Hyde-Arlington, poet, author of "The Dead Canary, and Other Poems."

SUSAN. And I am Susan Ann Brown, novelist, author of "Winds that Sough in the Night."

RALPH. Excuse me, madam, but you have interrupted us. I was about to read my poems to Mr. Powers.

SUSAN. Excuse *me*. I was here first. (POWERS *in glee watches dispute, rubs hands, then quietly gets hat and steals out L.*)

RALPH. But you went out madam. A publishing house is like a barber shop.

SUSAN. (*Snorts.*) Barber shop!

RALPH. Yes, when you leave you lose your turn.

SUSAN. Humph! I don't know anything about barber shops, and I guess from your appearance you haven't been in one lately either.

RALPH. Madam, the natural gallantry which appertains to my sex and calling forbids me to argue this question further with a lady. (*Sees that P. is gone, gives knowing look.*) Satisfied of my own rights in the matter I yield to you, I go. (*Bows, exit R.*)

SUSAN. He's not so bad after all. But what a difference between poetry and its producers. All contrast in this world! Now Mr. Powers—(*reads same paragraph as before, looks up, discovers P. is gone, screams*)—all gone! That fire must be real, for there isn't a soul in sight. (*Gong again.*) Oh dear, if my novel should be burned it would be an irreparable loss to the world. The very thought makes me shudder. (*Runs out R. crying "fire! fire!"*)

QUICK CURTAIN.

THE NEW WOMAN

A COMEDY OF A. D. 1950

IN THREE ACTS

BY T. S. DENISON

Author of

Odds with the Enemy, Initiating a Granger, Wanted, a Correspondent, A Family Strike, Seth Greenback, Louva, the Pauper, Hans Von Smash, Borrowing Trouble, Two Ghosts in White, The Pull-Back, Country Justice, The Assessor, The Sparkling Cup, Our Country, Irish Linen Peddler, The School Ma'am, Kansas Immigrants, An Only Daughter, Too Much of a Good Thing, Under the Laurels, Hard Cider, The Danger Signal, Wide Enough for Two, Pets of Society, Is the Editor In? The New Woman, Patsy O'Wang, Rejected, Only Cold Tea, Madam P's Beauty Parlors, Topp's Twins, A First-Class Hotel, It's all in the Pay-Streak, The Cobbler, A Dude in a Cyclone, Friday Dialogues.

Also the Novels,

The Man Behind, An Iron Crown, etc.

CHICAGO:

T. S. DENISON, PUBLISHER,

163 RANDOLPH STREET.

THE NEW WOMAN.

CHARACTERS.

Women.

MISS PINK T. HYKIGHT, Pres. of Club, who has never found a man good enough for her. Motto of the Hykight's "Soaring."

MISS ROSA LIGHTFOOT, Secretary. Young and pretty.

MISS DOLLIE GIGLETTE, who is up to date.

MISS BIRDIE ROBBINS, no longer a "chicken," and intensely anti-man.

MISS DAISY DOUGHFLYER, (Duffy, from the French Du Fay).

MARY, the stewardess who is known as "Smilax."

OTHER WOMEN, only talked about—Ernestine Arlington, who is engaged, and Willie Jones (not a boy), who is so very timid that the only thing she can do is to elope.

Horrid men.

JACK BLAKE, a collector for the gas company who is misunderstood by Miss Hykight but much better understood by Rosa.

BERTIE HOWELL, "at leisure, don't you know" and has time to fawnsy Daisy.

MACK, the ice man who fancies Mary.

Time of playing, one hour.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of the stage *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *1 E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance, etc.; *D. F.*, door in flat or back of the stage. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

COSTUMES.

BIRDIE ROBBINS, make-up of prim old maid.

MISS PINK T. HYKIGHT, stylish, modern according to taste.

DOLLIE GIGLETTE, mannish and easy swagger of a polite swell.

MARY, neat working dress.

OTHER LADIES, modern, according to taste.

BERTIE, *First Act*. Swell dude, bloomers, veil, long, pointed shoes with gilt chains from knee-buckles to toes of shoes, eye-glass, cane, and any other suitable extravagance. He must not however look vulgar. *Second Act*. Blue or brown drilling pants and working coat, slouch hat, whiskers, plumber's kit, tongs, lead pipe, hammer, etc.

BLAKE, first appearance, plain business suit; second appearance more natty with buttonhole bouquet.

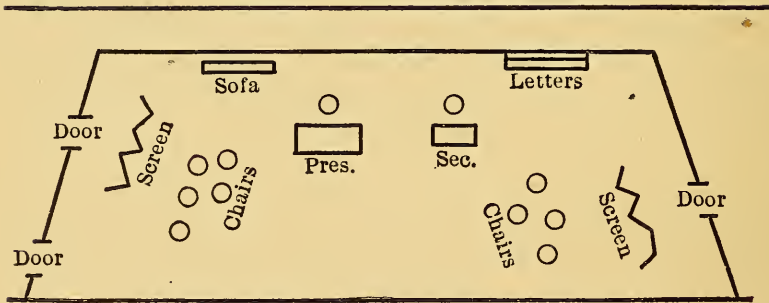
MACK, blue or brown wool shirt, overalls, slouch hat.

 PROPERTIES.

Vase of flowers, letters for case, writing materials, book for club roll, hammer, pincers, solder, etc., for plumber all wrapped in piece of carpet; cane, eye-glass, coins.

NOTE—This play may be made very amusing if the actors enter heartily into the spirit of its absurdities. This is specially true of Bertie Howells and Dollie Giglette, but care must be exercised to avoid anything approaching coarseness.

THE NEW WOMAN.



Some of chairs to be removed after Act I.

THE NEW WOMAN.

ACT I.

SCENE—*Club rooms handsomely furnished. Entrance R. in 1; door to dressing room R. in 3; screen to guard last door; chair of President and small desk, up C; table of Secretary left hand of President near flat; sofa R. of President's chair, another L. of Secretary's table; door to committee room L. in 2; screen to guard this door also. Chairs in rows at right angles to desk and President's position, not too many nor set too formally; as members rise or seat themselves they may move chairs a little so as to give air of informality. Pictures, flowers, etc., to taste. Screens far enough from wall that persons behind them may be seen by audience. (If played in private house any other arrangement suitable to the room may be made by slight changes.) A few young ladies besides those in cast may appear on rising of curtain to give idea of a considerable club. They may chatter and giggle to interrupt proceedings.*

MISS H. (*As pres., rapping on desk as curtain rises.*) Order, ladies! The club will come to order. (*All continue talking except sect'y who takes place.*)

DOLLIE. (*To member.*) Oh, say, have you read the "Woman who Dared"? She's the ideal new woman. It's just too lovely!

MEMBER. What loads of money she had. Just think, two hundred suits! And her pants were a dream.

DAISY. (*To member.*) I took so much pains with it, and then to have them say such things.

DOLLIE. (*Hearing.*) Oh, what did they say?

PRES. (*Raps vigorously.*) Order please, ladies! It is already past the hour for meeting.

BIRDIE. (*Sentimentally.*) Oh, I do take such an interest in this club. If this club fails, the new woman— (*Pres. sharply.*) “Order.” (*BIRDIE drops in seat.*) Oh!

PRES. (*Raps very hard.*) The club will come to order! Secretary, read—

MEMBER. (*Who has not yet heard the calls to order.*) Ashes of roses trimmed with—

PRES. The object of this club is to cultivate self-reliant *new* women. Let us live up to our opportunities. Secretary, call the roll.

SEC. (*Calls, nobody answers.*) Miss Hykight, Miss Lightfoot, Miss Robbins, Miss Giglette, Miss Smythe, Miss Tompkins, Miss White, Miss Spooner, Miss Suitor, (*hesitates*) Miss Doughflyer, Miss—

MISS DOUGHFLYER. (*Jumps up hastily.*) Miss President, I wish to correct the secretary. (*With dignity.*) My name is *not* Doughflyer though it is spelled that way. We are English, you know, of Norman extraction, and pronounce our name Duffy. It comes from the French Du Fay.

SEC. I beg your pardon, pleased to make the correction.

PRES. (*To sec.*) By the way, Miss Lightfoot, you appear to be a stranger to Miss Duffy. Allow me to introduce you. Miss Duffy, Miss Lightfoot; Miss Lightfoot, Miss Duffy. (*They bow.*)

SEC. (*Continues.*) Miss Hapgood, Miss Littlejohn, Miss Brownmuffin—(*hesitates*) Willie Jones.

CHORUS. Good gracious, is she a boy?

BIRDIE. (*Rises, severely.*) There seems to be some mistake about that name. One of the rules of this club is that no man shall ever enter its sacred precincts or even be mentioned except pro forma. I think it is an insult to the club even to mention a man's name here in that familiar way—Willie Jones—much less to put his name on the roll.

PRES. I agree to that, Miss Robbins. It is in atrociously bad taste if intended for a joke.

SEC. I found the name on a slip of members proposed.

PRES. (*With dignity.*) Ladies, who proposed Willie Jones? (*No answer. DOLLIE, who has been busily talking to a member suddenly realizes that some business is before the club and asks:*)

DOLLIE. What is the question?

PRES. (*Sternly.*) The question is, who dared desecrate our roll with the name of a man. Willie Jones, who is he?

DOLLIE. (*Jumps up.*) Goodness me, he's not a he. He's a girl! (*All laugh.*) Such a ridiculous mistake! It would so mortify poor Willie if she were here. She's such a dear, timid little thing; why, she hardly dares breathe.

DAISY. What a funny name for a girl, anyway.

DOLLIE. Poor thing, she can't help it. Parents old fashioned you know, and like men well enough to want their names.

PRES. The name is very good since it is borne by a woman. The new woman will not only do as she pleases, but call herself what she pleases. She will not await the pleasure of some man to bestow his precious name on her. *I* never saw the man whose name *I* wanted.

BIRDIE. (*Rises.*) Nor have *I*, the presumptuous creatures. When they fit themselves to be the companions of the nobler sex it will be time enough for them to ask our friendship only, and for us to refuse if we choose.

PRES. And we also assume the right to ask instead of waiting patiently like slaves in a market. The new woman will be no slave.

CHORUS. Never!

PRES. I believe the next business is to consider the applications for new members to the "New Woman's Anti-homo Club." (*To sec.*) What applications are there to come up to-day? (*Members begin an epidemic of whispering.*) Order please, ladies! (*Brief lull which ends in a general buzz.*)

SEC. (*Reads.*) The first name is Miss Ernestine Arlington.

PRES. Who proposed Miss Arlington?

SEC. Miss Brownmuffin, who is not present.

PRES. Has anyone anything to say before the ballot is taken?

DOLLIE. I don't know that I ought to say anything.
(*General curiosity.*)

DAISY. Oh yes, do.

DOLLIE. But people might blame me for trying to injure the girl.

PRES. Let people talk, the new woman does not care a fig for what people say.

DOLLIE. Miss Arlington is a very sweet girl, but—

BIRDIE. (*Rises.*) Miss President!

PRES. Miss Birdie Robbins.

BIRDIE. I rise to correct the language of Miss Giglette. I object to the word sweet. It sounds silly. The new woman will, I hope, not be a piece of confectionery, inciting men to cannibalism.

DOLLIE. (*With slight emphasis.*) Well, I don't care! Ernestine *is* sweet but that's not the worst, she's engaged to be married. (*Chorus of "Oh's."*)

DAISY. Who is he? Oh, I didn't mean that? Has he money? Is he a foreigner?

PRES. A foreigner with money! Bah! A foreigner is only better than the native tyrant in this, that he makes no pretension to be suffering from that antiquated, imaginary malady *love*. He boldly proclaims that he gives his name and reserves his freedom. He is at least honest. Engaged! Silly, weak creature, that's enough to know of her.

BIRDIE. I should say!

PRES. The constitution of this club, as we all know, forbids the marriage of its members. We believe that we have a nobler work to accomplish in the world. And I repeat, for the benefit of new members, that no member of this club may receive any kind of attention from any man nor pay attentions to any man, except by consent and advice of this club.

BIRDIE. (*Rises.*) I think we ought to censure Miss Brownmuffin for recommending such a creature who is

weak enough to throw herself at a man in that way, for I warrant she led him on.

PRES. Are there any other names to be presented to-day?

SEC. Yes, Mrs. Judge Stone!

MEMBER. (*Jumping up.*) But no *Missus* is eligible. We will have no woman who is weak enough to marry a man.

SEC. But Mrs. Judge Stone's case is quite exceptional. She is a brave woman. Filed a bill of divorce, heard the case herself, and granted a decree with a ripping alimony.

CHORUS. Good, good! (*Applause.*)

BIRDIE. What was the cause?

SEC. Her husband, the tyrant, objected to her smoking during their reception to the Count Spaghetti, who married Miss Bullion-Brown.

CHORUS. Oh! oh! the brute! served him right.

PRES. I think we should admit this brilliant woman, the champion of her sex, without the formality of a ballot.

BIRDIE. Yes, by all means, and extend her a vote of thanks, besides, for her achievements in the cause of progress.

CHORUS. Yes, yes!

PRES. Mrs. Judge Stone is admitted by unanimous consent, and the thanks is also a vote. (*To sec.*) What is next?

SEC. Some questions were to be presented for future discussion.

PRES. Read them!

SEC. WHEREAS: The New Woman's Club and Anti-homo Association points with pride to its record in the matter of political and social reform, it further views with alarm the gradual encroachments of the male sex upon the dress of women. Witness the almost universal adoption of bloomers by men of fashion, which is rapidly being imitated by male maids of all work, and even scullions and dish-washers.

BIRDIE. Miss President, such a condition of affairs is

ominous. It threatens the very foundations of society. In my opinion men are secretly encouraged in such practices by that class of women whom we designate as marrying women. Our battle is not yet completely won. A large number of our own sex oppose us, and cling to the old system which made woman a slave. I therefore move that a committee be named to call upon Her Excellency, Governor Angelina Perkins, and Chief Justice Daisy Flyer inviting them to a joint discussion of this important question, in the rooms of this club.

DOLLIE. I second that motion.

PRES. I see no harm in it and will name as the committee ex-Judge Birdie Robbins, ex-Mayor Dollie Giglette, of whom, by the way, we are all proud as the youngest mayor ever elected in this city, and Miss Brownmuffn. I think the question will be ably debated, since it is well known that Governor Angelina Perkins is inclined to a strict interpretation of the statutes, while Chief Justice Daisy Flyer has liberal tendencies and her rulings give men all the privileges which they may fairly ask so long as society is constituted as at present.

DOLLIE. For my part I think the question not important. Since women have almost universally adopted pantaloons and derby hats I am willing that the men wear bloomers and put feathers in their hats if they choose. Men are naturally vain and the slaves of fashion.

BIRDIE. We set a bad example in our dress here!

PRES. Our dress here is only a survival, regalia in fact, like that of the women's Ancient Order of Matrimony.

DOLLIE. It is very absurd and should have been abolished long ago.

SEC. I have the following question to propose: (*Reads.*) Shall men be compelled to remove their hats in theatres?

DAISY. The law says plainly, they shall!

BIRDIE. The law, indeed! What's the use to talk about the law when the people have been fools enough

to elect a gang mayor and a man at that. He winks at most outrageous infractions of the law! What are we coming to?

DOLLIE. The remedy lies in the ballot.

SEC. (*Reads.*) Shall a woman give her seat in a street car to a tired man?

PRES. That question is absurd. If the man is young and stylishly dressed he gets the seat and if he isn't he stands, that's all. Is there any further business?

SEC. None!

PRES. The club stands adjourned till the next regular meeting. (*All rise and with a buzz disperse going R. except pres. and sec.*)

ROSA. Hykight, I am worried about the finances of the club.

PINK T. Lightfoot, that is Doughflyer's business!

ROSA. Doughflyer is so reckless!

PINK T. How much do we owe?

ROSA. Nearly five thousand dollars.

PINK T. That is nothing for a wealthy club like ours. Why, in the old times when men carried the pocket-book and managed clubs they were always head over heels in debt.

ROSA. (*Surprised.*) Why, Miss Pink T. Hykight! Do you adduce the men's clubs as examples for our guidance?

PINK T. Certainly not. Their clubs are cheap nowadays because we allow them so little pocket money. And they are so weak in the matter of drinks.

ROSA. But we can't pay bills even in 1950 without money.

PRES. I tire of hearing about money. Money has never been the chief object in any condition of society.

ROSA. We'll not agree there. Our grandfathers and fathers made a god of money, a swinish, brutal fetich. But we must do something; our wine bill is enormous.

PINK T. That comes of giving a banquet at the Paragon Hotel and inviting a thirsty horde of men.

ROSA. But the bill must be paid, and the cigar man is clamoring for his money.

PINK T. Pay him!

ROSA. Pay him! Why, the bill is over three hundred dollars. We do smoke so much and the members are hanging the club up.

PINK T. That is contrary to rules. Doughflyer is responsible for that. She is too easy. By the way, have you a cigar about you?

ROSA. No, I came down in the car with Judge Flyer and she took the last one I had. I'll ring for Mary to bring in cigars.

ENTER MARY, *R.*

PINK T. Oh, here she is now.

MARY. Miss Hykight, there is a man at the door who wishes to see the president.

PINK T. A man! No man can come in here except in extreme necessity or in a menial capacity. Tell him to go.

MARY. I have told him that. He insists, says he must see the president and will not be put off longer. (*Going L.*)

PINK T. Will not be put off! Such insolence! Call a policeman. Goodness! I hear him coming in here! He's bound to speak to me. There's no escape. I'm subject to impeachment if this gets out.

ROSA. I shan't take any chances. (*Runs out L., P. T. following.*)

ENTER JACK BLAKE, *R.*

BLAKE. (*Bowing politely.*) Can I see the president of the club?

PINK T. (*At L., with dignity.*) I am the president. You are intruding, sir.

BLAKE. (*Bowing very low.*) I beg your pardon but I must see somebody.

PINK T. (*Aside.*) So polite! Your business, sir?

BLAKE. I am collector for the Universal Grab-all Gas Co. The bill, you know.

PINK T. I do not know. See Miss Daisy Doughflyer, our financial secretary.

BLAKE. Duffy! The name given me was *Doughflyer!*

PINK T. (*Laughs.*) How absurd! You got the name wrong. She spells it Doughflyer and pronounces it Duffy. She's English, you know.

BLAKE. Beg pardon! I didn't know that. I've looked all over town for that woman.

PINK T. She's a lawyer. Doughflyer and Muldoon, Cinderella building, corner of Maltida street and Marie Louise avenue.

BLAKE. Miss Hykight, I thank you for your courtesy. Sorry I intruded. (*Bows politely.*)

PINK T. Don't mention it.

ENTER MARY, L.

MARY. (*Sees B., coughs.*) Miss President, the ice hasn't come.

PINK T. I'll see you later Mary! (*Slips coin in her hand. Exit MARY, L.*)

BLAKE. By the way, where is the meter? Our man had trouble finding it.

PINK T. Step into the office, through that door. The stewardess will show you. (*Exit BLAKE, bowing very politely, L.*)

PINK T. What a charming man! The gas officials are so polite. I hear they train all their men in a regular school of etiquette, taught by a real French professor. But this little interview must be strictly on the Q. T. (*Exit, R.*)

ENTER ROSA and BLAKE, *talking earnestly.*

ROSA. (*Glancing round.*) Thank heaven, she is gone and no one is likely to come so soon after the business meeting.

BLAKE. You have a charming place here. But why is it so very hard to see your officials, Miss Lightfoot?

ROSA. Why, don't you know? Our rules are very strict. No man without a license is ever allowed to enter here except on certain days of public receptions. If you were seen here with me I should be subject to impeachment and expulsion and you would be hopelessly compromised.

BLAKE. (*Starting.*) No!

ROSA. A fact! Can I rely on your discretion?

BLAKE. (*Bowing his best.*) You can. I would gladly be the slave of such a charming creature.

ROSA. (*Pretending offense.*) No nonsense, please! The new woman dislikes the word slave. On your honor, do you promise silence?

BLAKE. (*Bowing.*) I do!

ROSA. For your own sake, too!

BLAKE. I must preserve my reputation. I shall be silent as the grave.

ROSA. (*Aside.*) Such lovely manners! Now go, please.

ENTER MARY L., *she starts and coughs.*

ROSA. (*To BLAKE.*) Oh, please go at once! (*Exit BLAKE, hastily, R.*) Mary, you know our rules! This is an accident. He came to see about the gas. (*She gives Mary a coin.*) Can I rely on you?

MARY. Forever, Miss Lightfoot.

ROSA. Thank you! (*Exit R.*)

MARY. Well, if there aint trouble brewin' here, my name isn't Mary Smilax. First the president making eyes at him, and bribin' me, and then the secretary. And he's just lovely, too. (*Hears noise.*) Oh, there's the iceman!

ENTER MACK, *the iceman, L.*

MACK. Is there nobody around this blessed shop? I've been hammering at the side door for an hour.

MARY. Nonsense, Mack! I haven't been out of my office for five minutes.

MACK. Don't care, Smilax. I can't be detained this way. I'll just leave your ice on the sidewalk hereafter.

MARY. Do it if you dare, and we'll just try the Susie Miller Ice Company.

MACK. The Susie Miller Co. be blowed! (*Coaxingly.*) Now Smilax, you wouldn't be that hard on a feller an' lose him a good customer like this club? The company looks to its drivers to hold customers.

MARY. And it's a poor dependence.

MACK. Mary, don't be hard on a feller.

MARY. Mr. Mack, your language is shockingly coarse at times. *Feller* is slang.

MACK. Well, Mary—

MARY. There you go again! Don't call me Mary. Call me Smilax, or Miss Smilax.

MACK. You used to be just Mary Smith.

MARY. Used to be isn't now. Smith is too plain and common for me. When I entered the employment of this club I became a new woman, and I just took a new name. I was tired of Smith. When I applied to Justice Daisy Flyer to get a permit to change my name, she said flowers were having a great run for names, and I chose Smilax.

MACK. Mary, you are prettier to me than any flower.

MARY. (*Smiles.*) That is a very pretty compliment, but you forget that it is only proper for *our* sex to pay such compliments as that. The new woman—

MACK. Bother the new woman. Since you have become a new woman, Mary, you drive me to distraction.

MARY. Mr. Mack, you are really provoking. So weak and sentimental. Do have a little regard for propriety, and the modesty natural to your sex.

MACK. I never can please you now. The old woman was hard enough to please, but the new one—heaven help us.

MARY. Mr. Mack, can't I teach you that it is not your place to compliment me, but my place to compliment you? You are rather forward.

MACK. Oh, it has come to *that*, has it? (*Going, angry, L.*)

MARY. (*Aside.*) He's so fascinating when he is vexed a little. (*Follows.*) He's irresistible. John!

MACK. (*Turning.*) She called me John. (*To MARY, stiffly.*) John! I think *you* are presuming, Miss.

MARY. I beg your pardon. May I not call you John?

MACK. (*Drops eyes coquettishly.*) You are so persistent.

MARY. Then I may call you John?

MACK. It's so sudden! Give me time. I think I shall never marry.

MARY. Very well, if that is your decision, I—I—

MACK. (*Alarmed.*) Oh, I didn't mean that.

MARY. May I seal that sweet confession with a kiss?
(*Advances toward MACK.*)

ENTER BERTIE R. 1, JOHN darts out L.

BERTIE. (*Coughs.*) Aw! I saiey there, now!

MARY. (*Turns angrily.*) Who are you, sir? Do you know where you are?

BERTIE. (*Adjusting eye-glass and staring.*) Yaas! (*Regarding her.*) Wathah pwetty, don't you know; but lacks style.

MARY. (*Angrily.*) Do you know where you are?

BERTIE. Yaas.

MARY. Oh, you do! Well let me say that the "New Woman's Club" is forbidden to men. Special charter, you see. Penalties attached! Why, you could be committed for felony.

BERTIE. (*Starting.*) You don't saiey!

MARY. Yes, I do say. Now will you go at once, before I call a policeman?

BERTIE. I cawn't, weally, till I've found out something I'm dying to know.

MARY. Well, did you ever! Wont go, eh! I shall have to throw you out. (*Business of pushing up sleeves*)

BERTIE. (*Starting.*) I declare, she's going to wesoht to violence. I saiey now! (*MARY takes BERTIE by shoulders and is rushing him toward door. He drops cane, eye-glass, etc. Makes a feeble effort to resist.*)

MARY. I'll show you how to go, you insolent cub!

BERTIE. (*Manages to turn round.*) Oh, I saiey now. Don't be hasty, you know I—I— (*gets coin from pocket and slips it in her hand.*) I only wanted to ask a question, then I'll go.

MARY. (*Looks at coin and changes tone instantly.*) Why didn't you say so at first. We may be detected. Who are you?

BERTIE. Bertie Howell, there's my cahd!

MARY. Very well, Mr. Howell. Your business?

BERTIE. You were so thweatening, don't you know.

You quite alahmed me. You look so musculah, don't you know.

MARY. Cut that. Time is precious.

BERTIE. You must sweah eternal secwecy.

MARY. If it is so very important as that, I think I'd rather not.

BERTIE. Me weputation is in your hands. A word would blawst it. You know I have long admiahed in secwet one of the membeahs of this club.

MARY. Indeed! That's no news. They are rather a swell set.

BERTIE. Awful swaggah, don't you know. I've noticed her in the cahs, don't you know, and she knows Governoh Angelina Perkins, too, and they talk politics—an' how I do wish I could undehtand those things, but I cawn't, you see.

MARY. Yes, I see.

BERTIE. Yestehday she gave me her seat in the stweet cah. It put me all in a flutteh, don't you know. I blushed scawlet and put me veil down at once.

MARY. Poor silly thing! You are very imprudent coming here.

BERTIE. Vewy, but I confide in you.

MARY. You may trust me implicitly, but what can I do for you?

BERTIE. Mention casuawly that I am an heir, mamma fwightfully wich, don't you know, only child, an' all that. Start a talk, don't you see.

MARY. But whom am I to talk to! I don't know your flame.

BERTIE. (*Sucks cane.*) Aw, an obstacle wight away, I neveh could suhmount obstacles. I saiey now, help me out, woman. A cwuel custom compels me to sit and wait to be wooed.

MARY. Describe her!

BERTIE. (*Brightening.*) To be suah, good idea, don't you know. Well, she is awfully swell.

MARY. Nonsense! Blonde or brunette?

BERTIE. Aw, thanks for the suggestion. How deuced clevah you aw. She's a blonde.

MARY. Clothes?

BERTIE. Velvet suit, cutaway coat, silk tile, silveh knee chains that hook into the wing of the shoe toes by a deuce of a clevah little hand, don't you know.

MARY. Why, that must be the Hon. Dollie Giglette.

BERTIE. *Dollie*, did you say? Oh, how fohgetful I am, I did hear them call her—

ENTER DOLLIE, *R.*

MARY. (*With warning gesture.*) Hush! There she comes. (*Runs out, L.*)

BERTIE. She comes! Wuined! (*Drops his veil instantly.*)

TABLEAU.

DOLLIE, *laughing, down R. C.* BERTIE, *with averted face, L. C.*

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE—*Club house as before. Time: Morning, a few days later than Act I. Pres. Hykight discovered looking at letter case.*

PINK T. Why, here *is* a letter. That's strange; my mail comes to my business office. (*Opens letter, reads.*) Why, from that Mr. Blake of the Gas Company. Dear me! I wrote him that he really must not come here any more and he has the audacity to answer, saying that he is obliged to come. The rules of the company are inexorable, etc. Nonsense! It isn't the rules of the company that compel him. It is something else. I guess I'm the attraction, in short. (*Sighs.*) I'm getting tired of all this strife fighting the battles of reform. The new woman is a pretty lonesome creature. But I might have been brought up a marrying woman. And if I had! Poor helpless creatures! (*Sighs.*) Well, sometimes I think that I'd rather preside in a nice home than in this club. Mr. Blake *is* handsome—such eyes and such a mustache! and such manners! How kind of the Gas Company to educate their men in etiquette. That

is because a woman is president of the company. Why, I've read that in the old time the insolence of gas employés almost equaled that of employés in the city hall nowadays. But he is poor and I can not stoop! The motto of the Hykights is "Upward," and I, Pink T. Hykight, a descendant of President Hykight, shall not be the first to step out of the family rank. The Blakes are of very good family, but Mr. Blake has only his salary.

ENTER MARY, *L.*

MARY. Oh, are you here, Miss Hykight?

PINK T. Yes, I am early, called for my mail.

MARY. How absurd it was for that carrier to get stuck in the chute.

PINK T. Yes, it might have been serious. Smilax, I want the silver counted to-day.

MARY. I'll attend to it, Miss Hykight. (*Exit, MARY, L.*)

PINK T. (*Looking at letter.*) No, I think Chief of Police, Brennan de Cork is more to my notion. The de Cork's have been illustrious for centuries. They were kings of Ireland, and they say he has made his pile in politics, too. I'll propose to de Cork yet. I believe he expects it, too. I'm sick of public life. Poor Blake! I'll just write him to call about the meter again and find some way to let him know that his hopes are vain. Poor thing! He is so infatuated with me. It's dangerous but I'll risk it. (*Rings.*) I'll write de Cork asking him to theatre this very night. (*Writes hastily*) No stamp! I'll mail it outside. (*Attempts to put note in pocket; drops it on floor. Rings.*) Where are all the servants?

ENTER MARY, *L.*

PINK T. Smilax, where is Belinda and Alfaretta Pansy?

MARY. I sent Belinda for cigars. Alfaretta is sick to-day.

PINK T. What hour do you open the club house?

MARY. At eight o'clock, Miss Hykight, according to regulation.

PINK T. Is your help all here at that hour?

MARY. Promptly, Miss.

PINK T. When do members appear?

MARY. Seldom before noon, and most of them after four. You see the trouble of dressing in this old regalia keeps them away. We ought to abolish such an ancient rule and admit the modern dress.

PINK T. That is a club matter.

MARY. (*Vexed.*) Oh, It's not for me to say. I just suggested. Miss President, the Swiss cheese for the bar is hardly up to the last lot, I think. Will you come and taste it? (*Exeunt L.*)

ENTER ROSA LIGHTFOOT, R. 1.

ROSA. (*Has not seen them, goes to letter case.*) A letter for me! A strange hand! (*Reads.*) Why, it's from that Mr. Blake. Thanks me for my kindness! Dear fellow. Hopes I may not think him bold. (*Laughs.*) Such audacity! He is bold, but I like him for it. And wants to meet me here. Oh goodness! That will never do. (*Looks at note.*) Tuesday at nine. Hopes I'll be alone. Why, he may come any minute. How indiscreet of him. He must love me desperately. (*Rings*) What-ever shall I do.

ENTER MARY, L.

ROSA. Mary, I expect a person here on business—important business. Is the committee room unoccupied at this hour?

MARY. Yes, Miss, that is, unless Birdie Robbins should come in. She goes round at all hours.

ROSA. (*Soliloquy.*) Why didn't she go into literature? She has no tact for politics.

MARY. No, Miss Lightfoot, she hasn't a spoonful of tact.

ROSA. Ah, Mary, you needn't notice everything. If she or anyone else drops in just say the committee room is in use, will you?

MARY. Yes, Miss. (*Exit L.*)

ROSA. How my heart flutters. I've read that in the old times women's hearts were always fluttering. That

is a weakness that comes from centuries of degenerate training, but the new woman *will* master it yet. The men manage better. Their great solid chests are as impassive as statues. We can be nonchalant, too. I'll coolly light a cigar. (*Feels pocket.*) Goodness, I gave the last one to Inspector Lillie Evergreen. (*Sound of footsteps, R.*) Goodness, there he comes now. (*Listens.*) He's saying good day to some one at the door. Oh, horrors! that's Birdie Robbins's voice. What shall I do? (*Darts behind screen L.*)

ENTER BIRDIE ROBBINS, *R.*

BIRDIE. (*Cross.*) I'll just look around and see that everything is in decent order, and I dare say it isn't at all. The other directors leave all that to me. Governor Perkins and Judge Flyer haven't attended a directors' meeting for three months. They ought to be ashamed of themselves. (*Looks in letter box, takes letter out, reads.*) Another appeal from the Pacific Coast Home Mission Society. Urgent appeal for help. The Chinese are sending missionaries to America by the score. Confucian daily paper published in San Francisco. Dear me, things are going to the bad headlong, and this club doesn't even protest. I wonder if those people have repaired the faucets in the dressing room! (*Exit R. U. E.*)

ROSA. (*Comes from behind screen.*) This is a pretty mess. I do hope he won't come. If I try to stop him at the door, it may lead to complications. (*BIRDIE heard re-entering. ROSA behind screen as before.*)

BIRDIE. Soap nearly all gone already. The servants are robbing us, feeding their relatives at our expense, and smoking our cigars by the score. We read that all these things happened in the old times. Alfaretta sick to-day! She'll have to be sent to the tobacco cure and the club will be obliged by law to pay the bills. Such demoralization on every hand. When the men managed things they stole everything in sight. I've just been reading a curious old book of the last century called "An Iron Crown." There were big thieves then, accord-

ing to that author, who stole millions. Now women will stoop to purloin a few cigars. (*Petulantly.*) I'm ashamed of them. (*Sees note on floor.*) What is this? (*Picks it up.*) Why this is directed to "Hon. Chief of Police, Brennan de Cork." It is unsealed too. Official business, doubtless, I'll see. (*Opens and reads.*) Mercy! Can this be true? Impossible! I'll put it back. No, it is a matter too important to be concealed. (*Reads.*) "Hon. Brennan de Cork: Miss Pink T. Hykight presents her compliments to Mr. de Cork and desires the pleasure of his company to the Elsie theatre to hear Paddiowski next Saturday evening. Find the usual gratuity for flowers enclosed." Such iniquity! I always suspected the sincerity of that woman. Her crime shall be punished. As vice-president, I shall call a directors' meeting at once. (*Exit R. 1.*)

ROSA. (*Coming down.*) Here's a pretty go! There'll be a scandal sure, for if there is a sincere member in the club, it is Miss Robbins. Who would have thought that Miss Hykight was so sly? Well, de Cork is a great catch. Dear me, if I am discovered. Mr. Blake is so indiscreet. I shall talk to him seriously. (*Steps heard.*) Goodness, some one coming. (*Darts back behind screen.*)

ENTER BLAKE, R. 1.

BLAKE. I do hope she'll meet me. Not here! How cruel! She thinks me too forward, but I can not conceal my love. (*ROSA behind screen leans forward eagerly to listen.*)

ENTER PINK T., quietly, R. 1.

BLAKE. Yes, I've been too forward. She despises me. (*P. T. advances on tip toe, also ROSA comes further down, pleased.*) Oh, for one word, one glance of those beautiful eyes.

PINK T. (*Aside.*) Poor thing!

ROSA. (*Aside.*) How delightful.

BLAKE. I have hoped in vain. (*Turns R.*)

PINK T. No, not so. Hope is—

ROSA. (*Coming out, screams*) Undone! Miss Hykight! (*All stare in surprise for a few moments.*)

PINK T. Miss Lightfoot, explain your conduct, if you please.

ROSA. Not to you, Miss Hykight.

PINK T. Then to the club.

ROSA. The club can have my resignation if that is what you mean.

PINK T. Your conduct has been scandalous. You have lured this confiding young man here utterly regardless of his reputation or the club's.

ROSA. Plague take the club! I love this man. Mr. Blake, be mine.

PINK T. (*Loftily.*) Oh, indeed! If it comes to that I think I am one too many. (*Sails out R. 1.*)

BLAKE. (*Modestly.*) I have been very indiscreet. Forgive me, dear.

ROSA. Darling, say no more, but you really must go at once. (*Noise outside.*) Too late. Get behind the screen there. (*He runs behind screen R., ROSA L.*)

ENTER DOLLIE R.

DOLLIE. (*With easy swagger.*) Here's a go! That silly little Bertie Howells thinks because I called on him three or four times and took him to a concert once that I'm going to marry him. Humph! he's decidedly fresh. But this is the poor boy's first season in society, and then (*with jaunty air*) I suppose I am to blame. So far forgot himself as to write me a note. Well, I must say, being an only child, his mamma's millions are very tempting. But then his papa is insupportable, no pop-in-law for me just yet. (*Looks at letter box, fingering letters*) "Grantly," "Gorman," "Ginseng," "Gunther;" no Giglette. Well, the ninny hasn't sent any more notes, thank fortune. I'm pestered to death with billet doux and designing papas. (*Going L. sees ROSA behind screen.*) Why, Lightfoot, old chap, what on earth are you standing in there for?

ROSA. (*Stammers.*) Why, you see Giglette—you know I was just listening if that induction was still in the heating coil. We could hear the engine throb plainly.

DOLLIE. The plumber fixed that last week. Come and have something.

ROSA. Excuse me please, you know I never drink.

DOLLIE. Teetotaler! I forgot; well take a cigar.

ROSA. (*Coughs significantly.*) Don't care if I do.

DOLLIE. Lightfoot, you have a bad cough. (*Exeunt L.*)

BLAKE. (*Comes out.*) Now's my chance to skip. (*Runs against*

BERTIE ENTERING *R.*, *disguised as plumber.*

BERTIE. I saiey there, now! (*Tools fall with racket.*)

BLAKE. Where are you going, you lubber?

BERTIE. Confwound you, it's your fault.

BLAKE. No lip, young fellow. You're too fresh!

BERTIE. Lip! Fellah! You aw vewy fwesh! You aw insulting, don't you know.

BLAKE. Hello! Who are you, anyway? Lookin' for a scrap are you? You look like a plumber and talk like an avenue dude.

BERTIE. I cawn't talk to you, you know. Because you're no gentleman, see?

BLAKE. Why, you little shrimp, who the deuce are you to talk about gentlemen? You're not a plumber, nor a gentleman, either. You're up to some game. I'll just unmask you (*Pulls off BERTIE's slouch hat, BERTIE screams, BLAKE pulls off his false whiskers. BERTIE hits him but BLAKE doesn't mind it.*)

BERTIE. (*Gasping.*) You—you fellah—

BLAKE. Don't try that game or I'll pulverize you.

BERTIE. (*Squaring.*) Don't you twy that. I—weally, I may hurt somebody.

BLAKE. Young man, what are you doing in this club, sneaking in here in disguise? (*Sternly.*) Give an account of yourself.

BERTIE. (*Shrinking back.*) Weally, don't be wash, you know. I came heah to meet the pearl of her sex.

ENTER DOLLIE, *L.*, *overhears, stops.*

DOLLIE. (*Hand to mouth.*) Me!

BLAKE. No you didn't, young fellow. That's what I came for, and I'll break every bone in your body if you meddle in my affairs. (*Dollie smiles pleased and gives expressive look.*) Hear?

DOLLIE. (*As before.*) Fun to come!

BERTIE. (*Contemptuously.*) Why, she wouldn't look at you. The peeless flowah of her sex—

DOLLIE. That's me. (*Laughs merrily. They start surprised.*) Really, this is too good! (*Laughs.*) Really, gentlemen! Fie on you! These persistent attentions are embarrassing. (*Comes toward C.*)

BLAKE. (*Bowing politely.*) Madam, I assure you—

BERTIE. (*Pushing him aside.*) Go, fellah! This is my affaih! Miss Giglette, I feah I look vewy ludicrous in this dwess and I cawn't get on without me eye-glaws, don't you know. (*Feeling in pocket for glass. To BLAKE.*) You've bwoked me chain, I saiey.

DOLLIE. (*Laughs heartily.*) Now go, please, both of you. I could have you both arrested. Don't cause a scene.

ENTER BIRDIE ROBBINS, *L.*

BIRDIE. (*Sternly.*) Men! In the Anti-homo Club. Is it possible? (*Severely.*) Miss Giglette, what does this mean?

DOLLIE. (*Laughs.*) Really, I don't know. Nothing, I guess.

BIRDIE. Miss Giglette, have you invited these creatures?

BLAKE. (*Aside.*) Creatures! Old Major Prim!

DOLLIE. I have not invited them.

BIRDIE. Then why are they here? This looks suspicious.

DOLLY. (*Haughtily.*) Miss Robbins, you forget that I am not on the witness stand.

BIRDIE. There's pretty goings on here in violation of our constitution and by-laws. This club is on the brink of dissolution.

DOLLIE. Pshaw! It's always on the brink of something.

BIRDIE. And they will not go, eh? I'll ring up the police. (*Starts toward police call in office, L.*)

DOLLIE. (*Seizing her arm.*) No, not that!

BERTIE. Police! Oh me weputation! Whew's me eye-glaws?

DOLLIE. (*Waving hand toward door!*) Now clear out, both of you, quick, or you'll get the G. B.

BERTIE. Dweadful. (*To BLAKE.*) Aw, you mad weckless fellah, waising this wow! We'll be wuined. (*Pulling BLAKE hastily out R., BIRDIE glaring at them. DOLLIE C., laughing.*)

DOLLIE. Well, that's too rich. (*BIRDIE glares at her.*)

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE: *Club rooms as before. Time, next day after Act II.*

MARY. (*Discovered as curtain rises.*) Alfaretta is very negligent of her work lately. There's the flowers for the president put away in the corner instead of on the desk, as they should be. (*Puts flowers on the desk.*) The postman is late to-day. Poor fellow! I wonder if he is stuck in the tube again. I wouldn't be shot through that tube for anything. Just think of being chucked into that pipe and fired a mile between breaths. The man always looks us if he were out of breath. They say all the carriers have to be hypnotized before they go into the tube. I think it's cruel (*During this speech she is looking at old letters in boxes.*) There are letters here for a member that's been dead five years. Why didn't that party give notice of her demise. (*Noise outside, L.*) There's Mack bringing the ice. Dear fellow! My heart is all in a flutter. I'll just wait to see if he comes in here to speak to me. I know he will. He's blue all day if he doesn't see me. Oh, if that terrible Birdie Robbins should discover us. I aint a bit afraid of the president. If she ever says boo, I'll just ask her how the Hon. Brennan de Cork is. Oh, there he comes.

ENTER MACK, L.

MARY. Good morning, Maxie! You are irresistible this morning.

MACK. Hist, Smiley, we may be overheard.

MARY. There's no one here.

MACK. Are you sure? If the club found out, you would lose your place and I should be compromised. They are so against love-making.

MARY. Yes, sometimes.

MACK. What do you mean, Smiley?

MARY. Better call me plain Smilax. You are here on business, you know.

MACK. All right, dearie, but what did you mean by that *sometimes*?

MARY. Oh, nothing. I know a thing or two.

MACK. I think my driver suspects me.

MARY. Yes, she's a jealousy old thing.

MACK. Do you think that's it?

MARY. Sure! Get the company to put on a man.

MACK. Oh, I couldn't think of trying that. They might suspect, and if they found out I'd be discharged instantly. It's posted in the rules and in display at that: "All male employes are absolutely forbidden to receive attentions from women, on pain of instant dismissal." The man has to take all the blame you know.

MARY. I'll protect you, have no fear.

MACK. (*Pleadingly.*) Mayn't I name the day?

MARY. No, not yet. You see, I've a good soft job here and I shan't give it up till the last minute. I'm savin' money. Now, you'd better go, Maxie. Some one *might* come, you know. (*Noise outside, R.*) There, be quick. (*Snatches kiss. Kiss may be blown if advisable.*) Ta, ta!

MACK. (*Going L.*) Au revoir!

MARY. Just in time. Some one is coming.

ENTER HYKIGHT, *R.*, followed by members to attend Directors' meeting. Buzz of conversation. MISS HYKIGHT takes chair, calls meeting to order. Members seated. Buzz of conversation.

PRES. The meeting will come to order! (*Nobody*

pays any attention.) Order, ladies! (*Sharply.*) Order, if you please. (*Sudden silence.*) A special meeting has been called to transact very important business. The call specifies an emergency and was made at the instance of Vice-president Robbins. Secretary, are the directors all present?

SEC. (*Reads roll.*) Hykight, Robbins, Lightfoot, Doughflyer, Willie Jones—not present. Is Miss Jones in the city, does any one know?

DAISY. (*Rises with solemn demeanor.*) Miss President, I have an unpleasant duty to perform. (*All in attitude of expectancy.*) I regret to say that Miss Willie Jones is no longer worthy to be a member of this club.

CHORUS. Oh! What has she done? Do tell us.

DAISY. The story of her treachery is soon told. She has eloped!

CHORUS. Good gracious!

DOLLIE. And so timid!

BIRDIE. (*Severely.*) Timid, indeed! All put on! I knew all the time that she'd do something. She's as sly as a weasel. I think no motion is necessary to strike her name from the roll.

PRES. (*Gravely.*) No, that is not necessary. Secretary, strike Miss Jones' name from the roll. If there is no objection I will appoint Miss Dollie Giglette director in her place. Now, Miss Robbins, you may state the object of the meeting.

BIRDIE. Oh, I'm so overcome, I must have a moment's time. (*Uses smelling bottle.*) That horrid, sly, deceitful Jones girl has completely upset my nerves.

DOLLIE. Miss President, I think I can state the object of this meeting, if Director Robbins will allow me. It's all about two men who get in here accidentally. I think there's a good deal of pother about nothing. I advised Robbins to let the whole thing drop.

BIRDIE. When such things are overlooked or winked at, the days of the Anti-homo Club are numbered, its purpose wholly defeated. Dissolution is at hand.

DOLLIE. Well, if a little thing like that is going to kill it, I say—

BIRDIE. (*Severely.*) What does the constitution say?

DOLLIE. If you insist, then let us take the matter up. One was the ice man who has a yearly permit to call once a day between the hours of 9 and 10 a. m. The other was a plumber.

BIRDIE. I saw the wretch! He was no plumber.

DOLLIE. A plumber is what is known as an emergency man and needs no permit, just as a male doctor was once called in to treat a member, in an emergency.

BIRDIE. I demand an investigating committee.

DOLLIE. Oh, I make no objection if you think it so important as that. But emergencies will arise. The ice man and the postman can not always be on time. As we know, under the new system, the postman is shot through the Instantaneous Pneumatic Delivery Company's tubes. Only a few days ago the poor fellow stuck in the tube owing to his carelessness in dropping a peach pit as he entered the chute. Reversing the engine only wedged him tighter and he would have smothered if one of the professors in charge had not thought to fire fresh oxygen balls at him by means of the new aluminum, vacuum, weather-report gun. Now they can't shoot a plumber through the tubes because—

BIRDIE. I insist this was no plumber. Plumber's don't wear eye-glasses. I found his on the floor. (*Produces glass. "Ohs" by members.*)

PRES. Suppose we call Mary. (*Pulls bell.*)

DAISY. We might as well go to the bottom of the matter. It's sure to get into the papers now.

BIRDIE. Yes, thanks to the indifference of the Public Censor, Adelaide Witherspoon.

ENTER MARY, *L.*

PRES. Mary, have you seen any men in the club rooms?

MARY. Only the licensed ones.

BIRDIE. (*Severely.*) Smilax, do you ever examine their licenses?

MARY. Why no! I know them all.

BIRDIE. How careless! Now tell me plainly, have you seen anything here that didn't look right?

MARY. (*Confused.*) Why, I—that is—

DOLLIE. Robbins, had you not better leave all this to the investigating committee?

BIRDIE. Let the president name it then.

PRES. I name the president, the secretary and Miss Dollie Giglette.

BIRDIE. I'll have no whitewashing.

PRES. (*Sternly.*) Is this a reflection on the chair and the committee?

BIRDIE. I make no charges. I only demand my rights. As the one making the motion, custom demands that I be named on the committee. Add Doughflyer. Doughflyer has the best interests of the club at heart.

DAISY. I shall try to act in this grave matter as would become my illustrious ancestors the Du Fays who came over with the Normans.

DOLLIE. Oh, I'm a Norman, too.

PRES. We are making much of a trivial matter.

BIRDIE. You will find it not so trivial before we get to the bottom. Smilax, tell me plainly, did you see a plumber in the club rooms yesterday?

MARY. I? Goodness, no!

BIRDIE. Did you see a dude?

MARY. (*Throws up hands.*) Laws a me, no!

BIRDIE. Well, I did, and so did Giglette. With him was another person, a fine-looking person I regret to say, who evidently had no business here.

DAISY. A dude! Shocking! A plumber is bad enough but a dude— Let the investigation proceed.

SEC. (*Starting uneasily.*) Miss President, I decline to serve on that committee. In fact, I have an important communication to make and deem this an opportune time. I hereby resign my office and my membership in the club. (*"Oh's" as before.*)

PRES. (*Solemnly.*) This investigation apparently is about to assume a personal tone, which I deprecate and can not countenance. I also resign rather than be a party to such an inquisition. (*Rises, vacates chair, comes*

down C. *Sensation* "oh's," "Did you ever," etc.) And I don't mind saying further, since certain persons are so inquisitive, that Chief of Police, Brennan de Cork has consented to change his name soon to Hykight. (*Sensation as before.*)

DOLLIE. Congratulations, old chap!

SEC. (*Rises and comes out from desk.*) And Mr. Blake of the gas company has at last consented to become Mr. Blake-Lightfoot. I've saved enough for two.

DOLLIE. Shake, old chap! (*Groans, others buzz.*)

MARY. And, if you please, ladies, I give notice. Next month I lead Mr. Mack to the altar. (*Excitement.*)

BIRDIE. And you too, Smilax! Since you were a tiny waif, this club has been your mother and has watched over you. We taught you to be a new woman, and this is our reward.

MARY. Oh, please, Miss Robbins, I respect you greatly, and I do love the club dearly (*sighs*), but I love dear Mack more. I just couldn't help it. (*Cries with face in apron.*)

BIRDIE. There's nothing to do but close the doors. The club is dead. (*Wipes eyes.*)

DOLLIE. (*Crosses R. C., takes BIRDIE's hand.*) Cheer up, Robbins, cheer up. You are not a marrying woman. I value freedom too much to surrender it. And there's Doughflyer, she'll stick by us. She has principles—and a name. We'll go on as before.

BIRDIE. The mischief is done.

DOLLIE. We'll reorganize if necessary. (*She leads BIRDIE down C., dress stage.*)

BIRDIE. (*Sadly.*) No, we never can survive this disaster. The old woman will laugh at the new, and ridicule kills. The club is dead. The finger of progress goes back on the dial of time at least a century. Good-bye dear, old club, the scene of my busiest, happiest, hours. Good-bye forever.

R. PINK T., ROSA, BIRDIE, DOLLIE, DAISY, MARY. L.

CURTAIN.

ONLY COLD TEA

A TEMPERANCE FARCE

BY T. S. DENISON

Author of

Odds with the Enemy, Initiating a Granger, Wanted, a Correspondent, A Family Strike, Seth Greenback, Louva, the Pauper, Hans Von Smash, Borrowing Trouble, Two Ghosts in White, The Pull-Back, Country Justice, The Assessor, The Sparkling Cup, Our Country, Irish Linen Peddler, The School Ma'am, Kansas Immigrants, An Only Daughter, Too Much of a Good Thing, Under the Laurels, Hard Cider, The Danger Signal, Wide Enough for Two, Pets of Society, Is the Editor In? The New Woman, Patsy O'Wang, Rejected, Only Cold Tea, Madam P's Beauty Parlors, Topp's Twins, A First-Class Hotel, It's all in the Pay-Streak, The Cobbler, A Dude in a Cyclone, Friday Dialogues.

Also the Novels,

The Man Behind, An Iron Crown, etc.

CHICAGO:

T. S. DENISON, PUBLISHER,

163 RANDOLPH STREET.

ONLY COLD TEA.

CHARACTERS.

MR. BOB SLIGHTLY, fond of a drop.
DICK PLYER, friend of Bob's, "takes the same."
DR. GAGG, who knows what ails a person.
MRS. SLIGHTLY, who drinks tea.
ALICE, her sister, admired by Bob.
MRS. NEVERDUN, who does not know when to go.

Time of Playing, twenty minutes.

PROPERTIES.

Bottles with labels and cold tea, hand-satchel for doctor, books, bottle of smelling salts, cane for Dick.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of the stage; *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *1 E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance, etc.; *D. F.*, door in flat or back of the stage. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

COPYRIGHT, 1895, BY T. S. DENISON.

ONLY COLD TEA.

SCENE—*Slightly's Parlor. Doors Right and Left. May have door at only one side, and one back, or only one door, if no better can be done. Sofa, table, chairs, etc., to taste. Discovered, Mrs. S., and Alice, as curtain rises, seated by table C.*

MRS. S. Alice, I'm afraid Dick Plyer takes a little too much wine.

ALICE. I begin to think so myself. At that dinner at the Brown's he came pretty near making a show of himself.

MRS. S. Go slow, Alice, don't get too fond of him.

ALICE. Leave that to me. I am decided on one thing and that is I shall never marry a tippler. There may be enough trouble in the family already.

MRS. S. Sister, what do you mean by that, neither of our brothers drinks.

ALICE. No, thank heaven, but you don't have to go so far as that.

MRS. S. (*Jumps up, drops her work.*) Alice, what do you mean?

ALICE. I mean your husband, Mr. Bob Slightly.

MRS. S. Alice, this is unkind of you. Robert never was intoxicated in his life. He says so himself.

ALICE. Before long he may not be able to say that. Sister, you don't hear what people say, as I do.

MRS. S. (*Distressed*) Alice, what do they say?

ALICE. Well, they say that since Mr. Bob Slightly's old chum, Dick Plyer, has returned from the west, that both are taking a great deal more liquor than is good for them.

MRS. S. But Robert is so kind and so good natured he can't refuse, and his business requires it, you know.

ALICE. I know it doesn't. How does brother John get along in the same business, without constant treating?

MRS. S. But Robert never was drunk in his life. He has often told me so. He never told me a lie yet.

ALICE. But he forgets that he has a liking for it, and that his appetite will grow.

MRS. S. Alice, you alarm me, this is dreadful. Oh, anything but a drunkard! But why do you encourage Dick Plyer, if he is so dangerous?

ALICE. Encourage him! I never encouraged him. I wanted to be sure of his character, and now that I know his weakness I shall decline his company.

MRS. S. But what can I do for poor Bob?

ALICE. Take the wine off your own table.

MRS. S. I never thought of that. But then Robert wishes it. It is necessary for his digestion he says.

ALICE. If put to the test which would he prefer? You or the wine?

MRS. S. Oh me, of course. He is so fond of me.

ALICE. That is what all wives say. Listen to me. Dick Plyer has written me a note that he will call this very evening. He'll come up with Bob and you will set out refreshments. The men will make a pretense of eating, but they will drink a great deal more. For some men the word *refreshments* means drink. They don't care a snap about the eating.

MRS. S. Oh goodness! I've noticed some men eat enough for a family.

ALICE. Take my advice and observe them closely.

MRS. S. But what can I do?

ALICE. I have a plan. To show your husband the effects of intoxication in its true light just get drunk yourself.

MRS. S. (*Surprised.*) I get drunk! Horrors! Alice, are you crazy?

ALICE. Not a bit of it. That'll teach him a lesson he won't forget soon.

MRS. S. (*Decidedly.*) I shan't do it, that would be disgraceful.

ALICE. (*Laughs.*) Just pretend, you goose. Did you think I wanted you to march down the middle of Broad street swinging your hat and singing "We wont go home till morning?"

MRS. S. You are ridiculous.

ALICE. Seriously, try it.

MRS. S. When?

ALICE. Now, this very evening.

MRS. S. It would be a great joke. But I can't act a part as you can.

ALICE. Oh, it's easy. Just stagger a little and look silly and say idiotic things. You've seen men drunk.

MRS. S. Do you think Robert would get angry?

ALICE. He might, but it'll set him to thinking. Of course he mustn't find out the trick.

MRS. S. I'll do it just for a lark, all to ourselves.

ALICE. It'll be a capital joke. I'll pretend not to know what ails you.

MRS. S. How shall we proceed? Robert will be home pretty soon to take his bicycle ride before dinner.

ALICE. I'll fill a wine bottle with cold tea and put glasses on the table. (*Exit L. for things.*)

MRS. S. Alice is so full of mischief. I'm afraid I can't do it right. I'll have to stagger and hiccup I suppose and be quarrelsome. That is the way drunken men always act in plays.

RE-ENTER ALICE *with two bottles and glasses, L.*

ALICE. (*Looking at label.*) "Veuve Clicquot." How's that?

MRS. S. Goodness, he'll think I've been drinking champagne.

ALICE. So much the better. Muss up your hair. Look silly. (*Musses MRS. S.'s hair.*)

MRS. S. Oh, Alice, I can't do it.

ALICE. Yes you can. (*Noise outside, R.*) There he comes. Sing a song! (*Spills liquid on table. ALICE seated L. takes book and pretends to read.*)

MRS. S. Poor Bob! it'll be such a shock!

ENTER BOB *gaily, R.*

BOB. Hello Pussie, I'm home early, you see. (*Notices her.*) Why Puss, what ails you? (*Alarmed.*) Another spell, dear?

MRS. S. Oh, Bob! you dear old—goodness me. (*Staggered to sofa and buries her face in the cushions.*)

BOB. (*Alarmed.*) Why, she is sick! Alice, what ails her?—why didn't you telephone for me?

MRS. S. (*In changed voice.*) Bob, you're a trump!

BOB. Oh, she's out of her head!

ALICE. (*Reading.*) I guess not.

BOB. I say she is very sick. (*Feels his wife's pulse.*) She's in a fever! How long has she been taken? (*Petulant.*) Why do you sit there so unconcernedly. Puss—Puss. When was she taken?

ALICE. (*Reading.*) Oh, I found her that way when I came in. She said she wasn't sick.

BOB. But don't you see she is sick? Can't you do something?

ALICE. (*Reading.*) Do something yourself. She's your wife.

BOB. Heartless creature! put that book away. (*Snatches book away from A., and flings it out L.*)

ALICE. (*Jumping up.*) That's manners, Mr. Slightly!

BOB. (*Dancing around excitedly.*) Do something, for heaven's sake. She's in a high fever, she'll faint. (*Mrs. S. groans.*) Get the salts, quick! You stand like a post. Rub her hands. (*Darts out L. saying*) I'll call Dr. Gagg. (*Women do not hear this.*)

ALICE. (*Going to Mrs. S.*) Get up you ninny, you are not half playing it.

MRS. S. (*Laughing.*) Poor Bob, it is too bad, it distresses him. I can't do it right.

ALICE. Well, I could. Sing, dance!

MRS. S. Why Alice, you shock me!

ALICE. Then upset the table, break something, stagger. (*Mrs. S. staggers round room. Flings a book across the room.*) That's it, throw something at his head.

MRS. S. I'll upset the table!

ALICE. Do it!

ENTER MRS. NEVERDUN, R.

MRS. N. I've been ringing half an hour! (ALICE and MRS. S. *scream in chorus*, MRS. S. *falls on sofa as before*.)

ALICE. (*Aside*.) That horrid Mrs. Neverdun!

MRS. N. Dear me! Is she sick?

ALICE. Yes, one of her fainting spells! Call some one please, quick! (*Rubs MRS. S.'s hands*.)

MRS. N. (*Down front, looks at bottles, sniffs suspiciously*.) Well I never! Them bottles looks awful suspicious. This is pretty goins-on for respectable people.

ALICE. (*Busy working with MRS. S.*) Oh, Mrs. Neverdun, please do something. The salts are on the side-board. Call Mr. Slightly.

MRS. N. (*Down front*.) She's drunk! Champagne, too! That's a matter for the church. I s'pose I'll have to testify.

ALICE. (*Coming down*.) Mrs. Neverdun, don't let her fall. Go to her. (MRS. N. *goes to MRS. S.*)

MRS. N. I guess she aint very bad!

ALICE. I'll call Robert. (*As she goes L, sweeps bottles off table, one in each hand, leaves glasses, runs out L. MRS. S. gets up angrily*.)

MRS. N. Don't excite yourself, dearie!

MRS. S. Hold your tongue, woman!

MRS. N. Laws a me! She's gittin'sassy, jist like a man!

MRS. S. I wont be insulted in my own house!

MRS. N. Dear me suz! Who's insultin' you, I'd like to know?

MRS. S. You are, you know it, too!

MRS. N. Highty tighty, that's the best proof in the world of your condition. You are a real nice lady when ye're sober.

MRS. S. (*With scorn*) Do you mean to say, Mrs. Neverdun, that I am not sober? You are a gossip!

MRS. N. Oh, don't go a callin' names. I aint a callin' any.

MRS. S. Oh dear, it'll be all over town before night.

MRS. N. An' s'posin' it is? What kin women expect that goes an' gits full o' that nasty champagne. An' it goes right to the head, too, an' stays there.

MRS. S. How do you know?

MRS. N. Bob Slightly has had enough experience to tell his wife better.

MRS. S. Oh, Mrs. Neverdun, don't speak that way. You are mistaken, I can explain it all.

MRS. N. I aint askin' no explanations.

MRS. S. Please say nothing about this. I've been foolish. Be my friend, will you?

MRS. N. Good land, haint I always been yer friend? I haint an enemy in the world as I knows of. An haint I been active in the sewin' society an' didn't I give them as nice refreshments as anybuddy? If I am nobuddy but Ole Missus Neverdun, aint I as good as the best of 'em (*Gets voluble, talking faster and faster.*) I aint no fool, I kin tell ye.

MRS. S. Yes, but—

MRS. N. I don't care a tuppence fur their talk. My tea an' my coffee an' my doughnuts aint beat nowhere.

MRS. S. Yes, but I—

MRS. N. I don't care a rap. Mrs. Hartley wears dimons and lace and she sets a mighty poor table, an' I aint afraid to tell her so. They all eat at my house till I thought they'd bust. (*Mrs. S. laughs.*) You kin laugh Mrs. Slightly, but I won't be put on. (*More and more excited.*) An' I'll have my say when it comes to that. Sallie Neverdun aint the kind to be put on an say nothin'.

MRS. S. But Mrs. Neverdun—

MRS. N. I aint castin' no reflections on *your* table, fur it was bang up, an' I sez right there, to Marier Wilkins, sez I, "this layout beats Mrs. Hartley's with her dimons an' her kerridges an' she—

MRS. S. (*In despair.*) But, Mrs. Neverdun, haven't I always been your friend?

MRS. N. I've nothin' agin you, Mrs. Slightly. Haven't I just said that many's a time? I said to Marier Wilkins that your table beat Mrs. Hartley's all holler, with her dimons an' two niggers to dish salat an' turn coffee. Why, her salat—

MRS. S. (*Excitedly.*) But Mrs. Neverdun—

MRS. N. There! it's goin' to her head agin. Lay down a spell.

MRS. S. Goodness! *do* let me say a word.

MRS. N. An' haint ye been talkin' all the time, I'd like to know!

MRS. S. Please don't say a word of what happened here this afternoon. I can explain it all.

MRS. N. I aint askin' no explanations, I tell ye. Everybody must think Sallie Neverdun is an inimy o' mankind goin' round devowerin'. The whole town knows I wouldn't harm a worm o' the arth. Buts'posin' it gits out an' the church hauls me up as a witness, I reckon they'd *make* me tell.

MRS. S. I've made a pretty mess of things. (*Calls.*) Robert! Alice! Where can they be? (*Going L., meets ALICE entering.*)

ALICE. (*Aside.*) Get rid of her.

MRS. S. Hist, we must explain all. (*They turn C. towards MRS. N.*) Where is Robert?

ALICE. I don't know. The cook says he went tearin' down the street bare-headed.

MRS. N. No wonder he's tearin' round. It's enough to make any man tear round!

ALICE. (*To MRS. N.*) Go and look for Bob.

MRS. S. Oh goodness, what shall I do?

MRS. N. Don't excite her, young woman! Lie down, dearie.

MRS. S. (*Indignantly.*) I am perfectly well.

MRS. N. Indeed you are not, you are dreadfully flushed! Are ye sick at the stummick? You must lie down. (*Leads MRS. S., resisting, to sofa.*) Alice, arrange the cushions. (*Just as they get her comfortably located.*)

ENTER *hastily R.*, SLIGHTLY followed by DR. GAGG. *Latter puts pill bag on table and goes to patient.*

ALICE. (*Aside.*) Now the fat's in the fire.

BOB. Are you better, darling?

MRS. S. (*Faintly.*) I think so. I didn't need Dr. Gagg, dear.

DR. Nothing like precaution, madam. (*Feels her pulse.*) Some fever. Any vertigo?

MRS. S. (*Faintly.*) Yes.

DR. Mr. Slightly, your wife's nerves are unstrung!

MRS. N. Well, I should think so.

DR. She must have quiet. She'll be all right to-morrow.

MRS. N. (*Aside.*) Knowed that much myself.

BOB. (*Anxiously.*) What is the matter, doctor?

DR. Old complaint with complications. (MRS. S. *throws up her hands unnoticed by DR.*) Her nerves are unstrung. Observe the abnormal action of the levator labiæ superioris, the orbicularis oris and the levator palpebrarum.

MRS. N. Land o' rest! jist hear that!

DR. I think there is a slight difficulty, too, in the decussation of the medulla oblongata which has established a sympathetic action with the solar plexus and the pneumogastricus.

MRS. N. Say, Dr. Gagg, what does all that rigmarole mean? hysterics?

DR. (*Glaring at her.*) The science of medicine, madam, has made many advances since you were a child.

MRS. N. Ye don't say! An' I s'pose it'll keep on a-dancin' till a doctor knows when a person's—(*warning gesture from MRS. S.*)

DR. (*Aside to BOB.*) That woman is exciting your wife. Get rid of her.

BOB. How the——what can I do with her?

ENTER DICK PLYER, *gaily, R.*

DICK. I say, old boy, I was just going past— (*Sees MRS. S.*) I beg pardon. Is Mrs. Slightly indisposed?

BOB. Only a slight nerve attack.

DICK. I'm very sorry if I disturb her.

MRS. S. It is nothing at all. I am glad to see you, Mr. Plyer. Alice, please show Dick a chair. (*Gives ALICE knowing look.*)

ALICE. Take this seat, Mr. Plyer. (*Then goes and whispers to MRS. S.*)

BOB. I say, Dick, wont you go into the smoking room? I'll join you as soon as I can leave my wife,

DICK. Oh, certainly, I'm awful sorry! Can't I be of any use?

DR. Just one moment, Mr. Slightly. Take this prescription to be filled at once! Make haste! Dose every half hour, till patient finds relief. Miss Alice, wet a cloth with vinegar and place it on her forehead. The solar plexus is dangerously disturbed.

MRS. N. That's an anatomy I never heerd tell of.

ALICE. Robert, I wish to speak with you, if Mr. Plyer will step into the smoking room meanwhile.

DICK. Certainly! At your service. (*Bows politely, exit D. F.*)

BOB. (*Going with A., L.*) Excuse me a moment, Dr.

DR. (*To MRS. N.*) A word with you, madam. (*They come down C. so MRS. S. can not hear.*) You appear for some reason to excite the patient. You had better go at once.

MRS. N. Oh, I kin take a hint.

DR. I mean for her sake, you know.

MRS. N. You needn't palaver. What ails her?

DR. (*Mysteriously.*) A very strange case, madam. Very strange. It would baffle the skill of a young practitioner. The eye of science madam—

MRS. N. I 'low it takes the eye o' science to see through a grindstone when there aint no hole in it.

DR. (*Pleased.*) Exactly! I've had in my lifetime just three such cases, all since la grippe came. I may say, in fact, that I have discovered a new disease.

MRS. N. Doctor Gagg, you are a wise man. (*He bows and looks puzzled.*)

DR. A compliment madam?

MRS. N. Nonsense! Did you smell her breath?

DR. (*Surprised.*) I, no indeed! Why should I?

MRS. N. You've made a fool of yourself. She's drunk, that's all!

DR. (*Excitedly.*) A fool! Drunk! Why madam, this is scandalous.

MRS. N. Oh, keep cool. You'll get well paid to say nothin'. But didn't I see the bottles on the table?

DR. But it is impossible.

MRS. N. Didn't I see her stagger? If you don't b'lieve, look at the puddles of wine on the table. Smell it.

DR. (*Puts finger in liquid spilled, smells.*) True! Why, this is an insult to my profession.

ENTER BOB, followed by DICK and ALICE.

BOB. Dr. Gagg, I wish a word in the smoking room.

DR. (*Indignantly.*) I have a word, too, sir. You have insulted my profession, sir.

BOB. But hold, I'll explain.

DR. I'll not hold. I am the victim of a hoax. Your wife is not sick at all.

BOB. (*Nettled.*) Why didn't you find that out at first, then?

ENTER DICK.

DICK. Yes, the eye of science, solar plexus, vinegar and water, etc. (*laughs*). That's great stuff. There's nothing like science.

DR. You are offensive, sir. I'll have nothing to say to *you*. (*To BOB.*) Now, Mr. Slightly, your conduct is most inexcusable.

BOB. But I'm trying to explain that it was all a little joke between my wife and her sister. She was only pretending.

DR. (*Pompously.*) And I am to be the victim of other people's jokes. You shall pay for this, sir.

BOB. Send in your bill.

DR. Bill! Who cares for the paltry fee! My professional feelings have been outraged. The profession is not to be trifled with. Mr. Slightly, I've a mind to sue you for damages.

BOB. A fig for your dignity!

MRS. S. Oh, Robert!

DICK. Let him sue. Get me on the jury.

DR. (*Taking up pill bag angrily.*) I shall consult my attorney at once.

BOB. Save the trouble and the fee! Let lawyers alone! Make your bill as large as you please. I prefer to be plucked by one man rather than by two.

Your professional dignity will at least insure *silence*.

DR. (*Growling.*) Humph! *My* feelings are nothing! (*To* MRS. N.) Madam, let me say to you that you are a meddling old fool!

MRS. N. Dr. Gagg, while ye're at it say there's a pair of us. Bob Slightly may pull the wool over your eyes, but he can't fool me. Didn't I see champagne bottles, and didn't I see her stagger, an' didn't—

MRS. S. Mrs. Neverdun, this is too much—

BOB. Easy my dear! (*Restrains her.*)

ALICE. (*To* DICK.) Oh, Mr. Plyer, can't you do something?

DICK. (*Bowing politely.*) I'll try. (*Steps forward to* MRS. N., *good humoredly.*) Mrs. Neverdun, let me say a word. I've always maintained that you can set a better table any day than Mrs. Hartley.

MRS. N. Well, I should say!

DICK. Now, when I stand up for people I want them to stand up for me.

MRS. N. Them's my principles!

DICK. Now, I can clear this matter up in just a minute. Miss Alice, bring in those bottles and glasses. (*Alice goes L.*) We'll clear up this mystery in short order. I guess I've seen enough of champagne to know it when I see it.

MRS. N. Dear me suz, I reckon nobody'll deny that.

RE-ENTER ALICE *with bottles.*

DICK. (*Takes bottle pours out liquid.*) Now this is *only cold tea*. Smell it, Dr. Gagg, smell it, Mrs. Neverdun. (*They smell.*) Look! there's a tea leaf in it. If any body wants to smell the table do so.

MRS. N. Well I vum!

BOB. (*To* MRS. S.) Dick's a trump!

DICK. Now mum's the word all round. Just a little joke of the ladies.

MRS. N. Good land, I aint a tellin' anything!

DICK. It must be quits, is mum the word?

BOB. My dear, what a lesson, I'll never touch another drop.

MRS. S. Oh, you dear Bob. (*Puts arm in his.*)

DICK. MRS. Neverdun, I still stick up for your table.
(*Dress stage, DR. angry, R., MRS. N., DICK down C., ALICE L., MR. and MRS. S. arm in arm by table.*)

MRS. N. I reckon you will. It's the best in town.

DICK. I am going to Mrs Hartley's to dinner next Wednesday, and—

MRS. N. Land 'o Goshen! Then jist come to my house Thursday an' I'll show ye a dinner 'at'll be a dinner. What do I care for Mrs. Hartley an' her ker-ridge an' dimons an' fiddle faddle—

QUICK CURTAIN, *while MRS. N. is talking.*

A FIRST-CLASS HOTEL

A FARCE

BY T. S. DENISON

Author of

Odds with the Enemy, Initiating a Granger, Wanted, a Correspondent, A Family Strike, Seth Greenback, Louva, the Pauper, Hans Von Smash, Borrowing Trouble, Two Ghosts in White, The Pull-Back, Coun'ry Justice, The Assessor, The Sparkling Cup, Our Country, Irish Linen Peddler, The School Ma'am, Kansas Immigrants, An Only Daughter, Too Much of a Good Thing, Under the Laurels, Hard Cider, The Danger Signal, Wide Enough for Two, Pets of Society, Is the Editor In? The New Woman, Patsy O'Wang, Rejected, Only Cold Tea, Madam P's Beauty Parlors, Topp's Twins, A First-Class Hotel, It's all in the Pay-Streak, The Cobbler, A Dude in a Cyclone, Friday Dialogues.

Also the Novels,

The Man Behind, An Iron Crown, etc.

CHICAGO:

T. S. DENISON, PUBLISHER,

163 RANDOLPH STREET.

A FIRST-CLASS HOTEL.

CHARACTERS.

LANDLORD.

BULGER, a drummer.

LEGGATT, a literary man.

SCHNELL, of the firm of Schnell & Augenblick.

Time of playing, twenty minutes.

PROPERTIES.

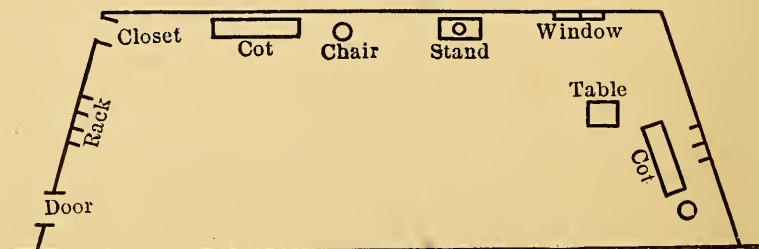
Pistol, valise, cane, pipe, book, empty bottles, box of pills, candles in candlesticks, crash bag.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of the stage. *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *1 E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance, etc.; *D. F.*, door in flat or back of the stage. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

NOTE—The rapid action in this play requires careful rehearsal and strict attention to cues. In many cases the least drag will spoil the effect. The boy who does the caterwauling must be always ready the instant he gets his cue from the prompter. He must be able to produce the effect of *two* cats and should make the audience hear distinctly.

COPYRIGHT, 1895, BY T. S. DENISON.



A FIRST-CLASS HOTEL.

SCENE—*Bed room, two cots, one up R. C. by flat, other by wall, down L.; table near head of last, with books, pistol, pipe, etc.; wash-stand against flat, L. C.; window in flat, L.; (or a door anywhere at L. can be made to serve for make-believe window by hanging a curtain.) As curtain rises, LEGGATT in bed, apparently asleep, vest hanging on chair at head of bed, pantaloons and coat on wall.*

ENTER LANDLORD and BULGER, R., LANDLORD carrying candle and BULGER's valise. *Lights low.*

LANDLORD. This is the very best I can do, Mr. Bulger.

BULGER. Hang it all, I believe I'll go over to the Eagle.

LAND. Hist! (*Looks toward LEGGATT.*) You'll wake him. No use to go to the Eagle. All full there. It's County Fair, you know.

BULGER. Hang the fair! Landlord, this is no way to treat an old customer. This is a one-horse town anyway.

LAND. (*In low voice.*) Very sorry, Mr. Bulger, but I didn't make the town. It's the best I can do. (*Looks toward LEGGATT.*) Mr. Leggatt's a very nice quiet gentleman. (*Confidentially.*) Why, he's a literary man!

BULGER. Confound literature! It aint in it with trade.

LAND. Quite right, but it's got to be humored same as other things. He's as quiet as a lamb if you don't wake him.

BULGER. (*Suspiciously.*) Hum! And if he wakes?

LAND. He's kind o'restless. He may walk the floor.

BULGER. (*Growling.*) Indeed! Let him try it.

LAND. (*Hand on B.'s arm.*) Quiet now. You may wake him. Good night, sir. (*Leaves candle on stand. Exit R. softly.*)

BULGER. (*Hangs coat on rack, goes to closet door, looks in.*) What's this? A two by three closet. (*Sits and takes off boots.*) I'll put my things in the closet, though I don't suppose this one-horse town can afford even a burglar. I'll strike this town from my list. Such a snide hotel isn't to be found this side the Mississippi river. (*Goes in closet.* LEG. *turns in bed and mutters in his sleep. Caterwauling in alley. Boy outside up L. does this.*)

RE-ENTER BULGER, *in pajama or colored night robe. Examines sheets.*

BULGER. Damp, as usual! I'll catch my death of cold. I always get a cold in this town. The place is so slow, that's the only thing people can catch. (*Rings bell by door R.*) I'll have the sheets changed, if I have to rouse every chambermaid in the house. (*Sits and opens valise.*) I'll take a liver pill while I think of it. Always have to take a liver pill in this town. It's so slow that a man's liver stops business. I am catching cold already. If I sneeze I'll wake him. (*Business of suppressing sneeze.*) There's a draft somewhere. (*Tip-toes to window.* LEGGATT *turns and mutters in his sleep. B. stops.*) I'll wake his literary nibbs, sure. (*Tries window.*) Wide open and stuck fast; windows always stick in this town. When they are up they stay up, when they are down they stay down. And that old hayseed actually calls this a first-class hotel. He amuses me. (*Sets candle on chair.*) Confound that bell. (*Pushes it again several times.*) I guess I'll smoke while I am waiting. (*Goes to get pipe out of coat pocket.*) Where's that pipe? (*Pulls coat with impatience, rack comes down with a clatter and coat swings round and knocks candle to floor, putting it out. B. darts to his bed and gets in.*)

LEGGATT. (*Rising to sitting posture.*) What's that? Who's there? Heh? A burglar! I'll shoot, you rascal! (*Attempts to pull out drawer of his table to find pistol. Drawer sticks and his books and everything go clatter to floor.*)

BULGER. (*Alarmed.*) Don't shoot! Don't! It's only me!

LEGGATT. (*Excited*) Who's me? (*Feeling for the matches.*) Blow it, where's that infernal candle? I'll have to get up.

BULGER. Don't get up! It's all an accident.

LEGGATT. Who the deuce are you, anyway?

BULGER. (*Strikes match.*) I'm a guest of this beastly hotel, if its victims may be called by so genteel a term as guest.

LEGGATT. (*Sitting up.*) A guest! I don't like that.

BULGER. (*Nettled.*) Neither do I.

LEGGATT. You've disturbed me and now I'll have a night of it.

BULGER. I'm very sorry indeed!

LEGGATT. So am I.

BULGER. (*With surprise.*) Sir, I apologized.

LEGGATT. Confound your apology! I was sound asleep.

BULGER. You *are* a nice roommate. The landlord was right when he said you were.

LEGGATT. I beg your pardon, stranger. I wasn't quite polite.

BULGER. Don't mention it. My name is Bulger.

LEGGATT. And mine is Leggatt. (*B. crosses and they shake.*)

BULGER. I'm very sorry I disturbed you. I had just rung the bell and was waiting.

LEGGATT. That bell hasn't been connected with the office for a year.

BULGER. Oh, what a hotel!

LEGGATT. When I want anything I just throw a pop bottle down to the right. (*Motions.*) It'll break at the office door and rouse the landlord.

BULGER. By George! It takes a literary man, after all, for ideas.

LEGGATT. You'll find some empty pop bottles in the closet. I keep them for that purpose—and the cats.

BULGER. (*Gets bottle.*) I'll try it. Did you say to the right?

LEGGATT. Yes, you can see the glass door if you look out. Hit the pavement so the bottle will crash. (BULGER *throws out of window, tremendous crash.*)

BULGER. What a crash for one bottle. I guess that will fetch him.

LEGGATT. Now you *have* done it.

BULGER. Done what?

LEGGATT. You've broken the glass of the hot bed and the tomato plants will all freeze. You threw the wrong way.

BULGER. You said to the right.

LEGGATT. I meant to *my* right.

BULGER. (*Provoked.*) Well, I'll be everlastingly—

LEGGATT. Hold on, Mr. Bulger, it isn't worth swearing about. It's of no consequence. We shall have to wait a month longer for tomatoes, that's all.

BULGER. I'm very sorry, Mr. Leggatt. I'll turn in now and risk the damp sheets. I hope you will sleep. (*Gets in bed.*)

LEGGATT. But I won't. I'm in for a night of it.

BULGER. What is the cause of your insomnia?

LEGGATT. My book!

BULGER. Keep away from the races, why don't you?

LEGGATT. I don't mean that kind of a book. It is the great novel I am writing. It is killing me.

BULGER. (*Blows out his candle.*) Ah! When are you going to die?

LEGGATT. (*Testily.*) Die! I'm not going to die.

BULGER. (*Sleepily.*) You'll make a long job of it in this town, it's so slow.

LEGGATT. But I'm not here for that purpose, I say. What is your line, by the way?

BULGER. (*Murmurs.*) Line—cheapest way—I'll ship your goods by Blue Line, same as before.

LEGGATT. Blue Line! Are you drunk? (*Pause.*) Hang it he's asleep. I wish I could go to sleep like that. I envy a drummer. (*Blows out candle, lies down and covers up; caterwauling outside*) That infernal cat again! (*Turns over with nervous motion of sleepless man and settles down. All still for say 15 seconds. B. begins to*

snore loudly. LEGGATT *sits up again, angrily.*) That settles it! I shant sleep a wink to-night. I'll read, I guess. (*Lights candle.*) Where is that book? (*Dextrously fishes book toward him by means of a cane which stands at bedside, lays cane across table. Begins to read—any book—gets interested, makes comments.*) This book is simply drivel, such character drawing. There are no great novelists anymore except myself and—Tolstoi. (*Reads paragraph.*) That fellow has a wretched style. His cacophony is terrible. The true test of good writing is to read it aloud. (*Reads aloud. B. rolls over as if about to wake.*) All stuff, the poorest kind of slush. I can't stand any more of that. (*Throws book on table and accidentally knocks cane on floor with a rattle.*)

BULGER. (*Starts up and sits in bed.*) What was that? Heh? (*No reply.*) Leggatt?

LEGGATT. Only my cane, sir. I'm very sorry.

BULGER. So am I.

LEGGATT. Ah, then we agree. Will you join me in a pipe since you are awake?

BULGER. A pipe at midnight! Well, you are cool!

LEGGATT. No, I'm not. I am on the contrary slightly feverish.

BULGER. Your proposition is cool enough. Smoke at this hour!

LEGGATT. I find it soothing. I cultivate repose of mind. It isn't what we are, you know, in this world but how we like the situation. To like what we can't mend is the true philosophy.

BULGER. Philosophy be blowed! This is a situation that I don't like.

LEGGATT. I can't say that I actually enjoy it but since— (*Caterwauling outside.*)

BULGER. (*Gets up angrily*) Oh those infernal cats. I'd like to murder every cat in creation.

LEGGATT. Kindly throw a pop bottle. Straight ahead this time over the shed.

BULGER. (*Snorting.*) Throw it yourself.

LEGGATT. (*Coolly.*) It was only a suggestion to be acted on or not at your discretion.

BULGER. I'd as soon have a room over a boiler shop as in this infernal little hotel. First-class—oh, what a liar this landlord is.

LEGGATT. My dear sir, your attitude toward Boniface is hardly justifiable. Landlords indulge in hyperbole.

BULGER. Hyperbole! What is that?

LEGGATT. It is the faculty of not letting a statement lack strength.

BULGER. Well, I must say this landlord's statements are very robust.

LEGGATT. Neatly put, Bulger. I believe you cultivate literature yourself. You should at any rate. Literature—

BULGER. (*Walking floor.*) Literature be d—d.

LEGGATT. My dear sir, you wont sleep at all if you go on at that rate. Since you decline to join me in a pipe let me read a chapter of Squibbs' last novel to you; that'll do the business.

BULGER. (*Pausing in front of L.'s cot.*) Read Squibbs to me! At midnight, in a strange hotel! Preposterous!

LEGGATT. He is very soothing.

BULGER. (*Emphatically.*) I wont have it (*gets in bed*).

LEGGATT. I'm very sorry. I'll have to read all to myself.

BULGER. (*Sitting up.*) Are you going to read?

LEGGATT. I am.

BULGER. And keep that candle burning?

LEGGATT. Certainly! I don't read in the dark. I haven't cat's eyes.

BULGER. Really, I say—do you know that I have a call for the three o'clock train?

LEGGATT. Don't worry about it, Bulger. I shall be awake and I'll call you promptly. Will 2:45 be about right?

BULGER. (*Jumps up.*) That man is crazy. I'll never get a wink of sleep here. (*Seizes blanket*) There's a sofa in the hall, I'll try that. Next time I come to this town I'll stop at the roundhouse for a quiet place. (*Runs out R. with candle and blanket.*)

LEGGATT. I am disappointed in him. I thought his

nerves were sound. He'll break down if he travels long. He'll catch cold in the hallway, I'm afraid. (*Lays down book. Pause.*) My sleepy spell has come on. I didn't expect it till four o'clock. I believe I shall not pass a white night, as the French say, after all. (*Lies down and goes to sleep. Pause 15 seconds.*)

ENTER LANDLORD, *tiptoe, R.*

LAND. (*Looks at B.'s bed, then at L.'s.*) Bulger is a strange man. Now, why did he leave his bed and take that sofa in the hall? He's the hardest customer to please that comes this way. Doesn't like cats, finicky about drafts, always sends his steak back, objects to two in a room. I s'pose two in a bed 'ud set 'im crazy. There aint a steadier, nicer man in the house than Mr. Leggatt. Where shall I put that Dutchman? The sofa was the last thing. (*Scratches head.*) Why, here, of course. I'll just make up the bed! (*Hastily makes up bed.*) There, he'll not notice it has been slept in. (*Caterwauling outside.*)

EXIT R. and RE-ENTER with SCHNELL.

LAND. Quietly! There's a man asleep there.

SCHNELL. Oh, dis vas a touble room alretty?

LAND. Yes.

SCHNELL. (*Looking round.*) Mit single petts. Lant-lort, vas dot man safe?

LAND. Perfectly safe.

SCHNELL. Vel, I mean vas I safe? I know he was safe, alretty.

LAND. Why, he's the peacefulest man in the town. (*Impressively.*) He's a littery chap.

SCHNELL. (*Puzzled.*) Littery man! Vat was dot?

LAND. He writes books.

SCHNELL. Oh, ya, a pookkeeper.

LAND. No, he writes for the magazines.

SCHNELL. (*Still puzzled, scratches head.*) Mackaseens! Ya, powter mackaseens. Ya, ya, dot bin all right. I kess, he wont plow up.

LAND. (*Ready to go.*) Your name is Schnell, I believe.

SCHNELL. Ya! Gus Schnell, of Schnell oont Augenblick.

LAND. Line sauerkraut?

SCHNELL. Sauerkraut oont weinerwurst.

LAND. Any call?

SCHNELL. Ya, by de Cherman saloons.

LAND. I mean shall I call you in the morning?

SCHNELL. Yoost leaf me alone till I shleeps out.
(*Exit LANDLORD R.*)

SCHNELL. (*Taking off shoes.*) Dot man was a goot shleeper, alretty. I hope he ton't shnore sometimes. Dot man shleep like one little papy. (*Takes off coat, feels bed.*) Dunder! dot pett vas warm alretty. Dere moost pe a furnace oonter dot pett. (*Looks, feels.*) I feels vint. Dot was strange, der room colt, mit vint plowin, oont der pett varm. Dere vas no planket py dot pett. Gott in himmel! vy vas dot pet varm! meppe dot wasn't a mystery. I yoost shleep in my clodings, I take no shances mit dot preeze plowin. (*Gets in bed.*) Ach, I forcot to put dot candle out. I plieve I can reach him. (*Reaches out toward candle in chair and losing balance falls out of bed with a crash, extinguishing candle and overturning chair.*)

LEGGATT. (*Starting.*) What's that? Where's my pistol?

SCHNELL. Gott in himmel, ton't shoot.

LEGGATT. (*Crossly.*) Well, what ails you now?

SCHNELL. Nodings. I yoost fell out py de pett.

LEGGATT. (*Half awake.*) You have disturbed me again! Why in thunder can't you go to sleep?

SCHNELL. (*Angry.*) Vel, vy tont you gif me some dime alretty? I yoost cot in mine pett, two tree minutes foreby. (*Gets in bed.*)

LEGGATT. (*Starting up, wide awake.*) That's a strange voice. Bulger—(*Pause.*) Bulger—Great heavens! has Bulger been murdered? (*Tries to strike matches, several go out.*) This comes of putting strangers in the same room. What ails the infernal matches! (*Lights candle; SCHNELL is all covered up except his face, LEG. peers at him for a moment.*) That isn't Bulger. Where can Bulger

be! That's a burglar, I'll bet. (*Gets pistol quietly from drawer, sitting up in bed.*) I'll have a crack at him if he resists. (*Sharply to SCHNELL.*) Hello there, you!

SCHNELL. Vas?

LEGGATT. A Dutchman! Heh, you fellow! Sit up or I'll shoot.

SCHNELL. (*Bounding out of bed and badly scared.*) Mine Gott, meester ton't shoot! Vat in himmel you want alretty yet?

LEGGATT. Who are you? Where is Bulger?

SCHNELL. Pulcher! I ton't know Pulcher. Gott in himmel, put away dot pistol down.

LEGGATT. Who are you?

SCHNELL. Put dot bistol town. It goes off meppe.

LEGGATT. What are you doing here?

SCHNELL. Shleeping.

LEGGATT. Well, why in the dickens don't you sleep then? Another man in my room! The landlord is drunk again. He'll have the whole town in here before morning. (*SCHNELL standing middle of room.*) Why don't you go to bed?

SCHNELL. Ya, I coes right away. (*Pause.*) Mine frent.

LEGGATT. Well?

SCHNELL. Dot lantlort sait you vas a beaceful chentleman. I vas beaceful too oont I vants no more misdakes apout purglars oont bistols. My name vas *Schnell*, of Schnell oont Augenblick, wholesalers mit sauerkraut. Dat's my cart. (*Gives LEGGATT card.*)

LEGGATT. (*Throws card away.*) Confound it man, will you go to bed?

SCHNELL. Ya! Ya! (*Gets into bed.*) He vas not a pit sociable.

LEGGATT. And look here, Mr. Wagonblock—

SCHNELL. Nine, Schnell! of te firm—

LEGGATT. Well, Snell then; you'd better keep pretty quiet. If this racket continues much longer I'll miss my four o'clock sleeping spell. Now I wont be disturbed. (*Lies down.*)

SCHNELL. Ya! Ya! (*Pause fifteen seconds, then loud*

caterwauling outside, ad lib.) Oh, dem cats! (*Softly.*) I was afraid of dot beaceful littery chap. He might shoot if he hears dem cats. (*Rolls over.*) Vell, I ton't schleep, dot's sure, alretty. (*Glances at L.'s cot.*) Dot man was tangerous. I yoost dries to ket a nap by der office. (*Rises, softly stealing toward door, R, LEG. rolls over.*) SCHNELL, *alarmed, darts out.*)

LEGGATT. (*Sleepily yawns.*) More noise, somewhere, and I was just going—(*settles down and drops to sleep, short loud caterwauling, then all quiet.*)

BULGER *steals in R. with candle.*

BULGER. This night will be worse on me than a week's sickness. I'll have to take another liver pill. (*Takes pill.*) If I had a keg of powder under this old hotel I'd blow it to Kingdom-come, landlord, cats and all. But I mustn't wake that author or he'll want to read Squibbs' novel to me. He's had a good sleep. I've caught cold in that hall. It was like the Cave of the Winds. (*Feels bed. Surprised.*) Why, that bed is warm yet. That's very strange! The room is as cold as a barn. There's no blanket here either. I left that in the hall. If I close that window may be I can get along. I'll wake everybody in the house probably. (*Goes softly to window, tugs at it, steals glance at LEGGATT, gives a quick tug, down comes window on the run and breaks a pane of glass.*)

LEGGATT. (*Starting up, sitting posture.*) What's that? Who's there? (*BULGER crawls behind the curtains.*) Hey there! Say! (*Pause.*) It's that Dutchman again! He's worse than Bulger was. Fallen out of that rickety old bed again, I suppose. If he'd only break his neck! (*Scratching matches, lights candle.*) Why, he isn't there. Now, that's odd! Both gone! A good riddance. I may catch my four o'clock turn yet. (*Starts.*) My watch! I'll bet that Dutchman was a thief in disguise. (*Feels in vest pocket.*) No, it is there all right. I have nothing else to steal. I'm an author. He wouldn't take Squibbs' novel. No, nobody would run away with Squibbs. (*Looks at watch again.*) 2:45! It's just time

for Bulger's train. (B. *behind curtain*, "Confound it.") What's that? I surely heard a voice. Some one is concealed somewhere. I'll call the landlord. No bell. I'll catch cold if I get up to throw a pop bottle. I guess I'll just fire the pistol. (B. *in alarm dodges closer to wall. Pistol shot.*) There! I guess that'll fetch him. I'll give him a piece of my mind. When I took this room I gave him the privilege of putting in a quiet party occasionally. 'Quiet! This has been a delightfully quiet night.

ENTER LANDLORD, R., *excitedly followed by* SCHNELL.

LAND. Great heavens! Where was that shot?

SCHNELL. Himmel! He sound like a cannon. I joomp out o' my schleep ten feet alretty.

LAND. (*Excitedly.*) Where was it? The house will be in an uproar. Leggatt, why don't you speak?

LEGGATT. (*Coolly.*) I *will* speak. Landlord, it is my deliberate opinion that you keep the worst hotel that I ever saw.

LAND. That's a slander, strictly first-class! But the shot?

LEGGATT. In the absence of a bell the shot was simply to call you.

LAND. (*Angrily.*) Why, you don't mean to say—

LEGGATT. That's just what I mean to say. You were to put only quiet people in here.

LAND. Bulger is all right. Best man on the road.

LEGGATT. He has softening of the brain.

LAND. Impossible! Bulger is one of the best salesmen on the road.

LEGGATT. I've had enough of him. I think he's crazy. (B. *angry gesture from behind curtain.*)

LAND. Nonsense! His head is as level as—as mine.

LEGGATT. I wont dispute *that!*

LAND. And you mean you fired a pistol and alarmed the whole house just to tell me this.

LEGGATT. I'm not done yet. Next thing you bring in an idiotic Dutchman—

SCHNELL. Vy, you rascal! dot is me.

LEGGATT. (*With wave of hand.*) Allow me, Wagon-block. I'm talking to the landlord.

LAND. Let up and go to sleep. You'll be all right in the morning. Where is Bulger? It's train time.

LEGGATT. Bulger! What do I know about Bulger? Get out now and leave me alone.

LAND. But Bulger—(*LEG. lies down.*) Say, Leggatt!

SCHNELL. I tink dot littery chap haf kilt Pulcher.

LAND. (*Starting.*) What? (*Seizes LEGGATT by arm and jerks him to sitting posture.*) Produce Bulger. The shot—Bulger. Have you murdered him?

LEGGATT. (*Throwing him off.*) I'm ready to murder somebody. (*Seizes cane.*)

LAND. (*Retreating.*) Where is Bulger?

BULGER. Here he is! (*Strides down angrily.* LAND. and SCHNELL start back.) And let me add to what that literary man says. I thought he could use words better in such a case than a plain drummer, but he isn't in it. Of all the noisy, windy, ill-kept, bad-smelling, disreputable (*gets emphatic as he speaks*), disorderly, rag-tag-and-bob-tail hotels in creation—

SCHNELL. Mine Gott!

LAND. Hold on, sir. You're going too far.

BULGER. I'll go farther next trip. I'll go to the next town. (*Getting valise and things.*)

LAND. Your bill is ready.

BULGER. (*Snorting.*) Bill! bill!

LAND. (*Decidedly.*) I said bill.

LEGGATT. Bulger, you'll miss your train if you stand there quarreling. Now clear out, all of you, or I'll miss my 4 o'clock sleep. I almost feel as if I should miss it after this. (*LANDLORD takes B.'s valise and is going R. followed by B. SCHNELL stands undecided.*) Hi there, landlord, don't leave that Dutchman here. (*LANDLORD pays no attention, exeunt.*)

SCHNELL. (*Angrily.*) Tutchman! dat was me—Mine frent, I was no Tutchman, I was Cherman oont—

LEGGATT. Get out before I commit murder. A first-class quiet hotel! Oh! (*Reaches for pistol.* SCHNELL goes flying out R.) QUICK CURTAIN.

MADAM PRINCETON'S TEMPLE OF BEAUTY

A FARCE

BY T. S. DENISON

Author of

Odds with the Enemy, Initiating a Granger, Wanted, a Correspondent, A Family Strike, Seth Greenback, Louva, the Pauper, Hans Von Smash, Borrowing Trouble, Two Ghosts in White, The Pull-Back, Country Justice, The Assessor, The Sparkling Cup, Our Country, Irish Linen Peddler, The School Ma'am, Kansas Immigrants, An Only Daughter, Too Much of a Good Thing, Under the Laurels, Hard Cider, The Danger Signal, Wide Enough for Two, Pets of Society, Is the Editor In? The New Woman, Patsy O'Wang, Rejected, Only Cold Tea, Madam P's Beauty Parlors, Topp's Twins, A First-Class Hotel, It's all in the Pay-Streak, The Cobbler, A Dude in a Cyclone, Friday Dialogues.

Also the Novels,

The Man Behind, An Iron Crown, etc.

CHICAGO:
T. S. DENISON, PUBLISHER,
163 RANDOLPH STREET.

MADAME PRINCETON'S TEMPLE OF BEAUTY.

CHARACTERS.

MADAME PRINCETON, proprietor of Temple of Beauty.
MRS. COMPTON, very stout, wants to be reduced.
MISS DICKIE BIRD, who wants to be bleached.
MISS TERWILLIGER, who is in search of a complexion.
MISS MCFADDEN, a suspicious enquirer.
SUSAN, an assistant of Madame P.'s.

Time of playing, twenty minutes.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of the stage; *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.* left; *1 E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance, etc.; *D. F.* door in flat or back of the stage. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

NOTE—To present this piece properly, the ladies must make up as directed. But young ladies as a rule greatly dislike putting anything disfiguring on their faces. Miss Terwilliger should use make-up paints, one side of face fiery red, the other very brown, freckled. But she may get along very well by bandaging one side and splotching the other freely with court plaster, reddened with carmine ink. It is best to select a lady naturally stout, with a keen sense of humor, for Mrs. Compton. Full instructions may be found in a good "make-up" book.

COPYRIGHT, 1895, BY T. S. DENISON.

MADAME PRINCETON'S TEMPLE OF BEAUTY.

SCENE—*Entrance R. and L. in 1. D. F., L. C.; shelves for "goods" against flat R. C., sofa near wall up L., chair between that and door R., table with books and flowers down L. C., operating chair (barber's) R. C.; other chairs and little accessories to taste, but do not crowd stage. May be played in any room having two doors.*

SUSAN. (*Discovered as curtain rises examining toilet articles on shelves.*) The skin food is nearly out. Skin food! Mutton fat and bergamot, cost, ten cents a jar. China jar and gilt label twenty cents more, total thirty cents, sells for five dollars. Well I guess there's more money in skin food than there is in stomach food or brain food, for that matter. (*Takes up another bottle.*) Anti-fat! Vinegar and water, three dollars a bottle. Anti grandmother! (*Laughs.*) Why, I'm talking about my relatives. What fools these women are. I'll start a Beauty Parlor I guess. (*Coquettishly.*) I am a sample of Madame Princeton's work myself. Humph! I never did a blessed thing for my beauty. I wouldn't put her skin food on a mangy dog. That fat old Compton thing goes waddling round taking anti-fat and jerking the pulleys in the gymnasium. My, she makes me laugh. She gets fatter every day.

ENTER *briskly* MADAME P., R.

MAD. P. Susan, have you opened up the gymnasium to air it?

SUSAN. Yes'm!

MAD. P. Where is Mary?

SUSAN. In the stock room.

MAD. P. Have we plenty of everything? There's going to be a run on Madame Princeton's Toilet Articles. The World's Fair medal is a great card.

SUSAN. I suppose we'll get that medal before the next Fair opens?

MAD. P. The delay is so annoying. But we'll do as the others do—say we have it already.

SUSAN. The skin food is low.

MAD. P. Did you telephone the commission man to hurry up that mutton tallow?

SUSAN. Yes, he sent it by mistake to Madame La Duke's Parlors.

MAD. P. Madame La Duke's, indeed! I'll sue her for damages if she steals any more of my secrets.

SUSAN. I guess Madame La Duke knows mutton fat from goose grease.

MAD. P. She is an ignorant imposter. Every idea she has she stole from me. Tell Mary to set the girls making a gross of skin food immediately. (*Exit SUSAN, L.*)

ENTER MRS. COMPTON, *R.*, *puffing*.

MAD. P. (*Running to meet her.*) Why, how charming you look, Mrs. Compton.

MRS. C. (*Dropping in chair.*) I'm nearly starved to death. I haven't eaten a bite of meat for three days.

MAD. P. Abstinence and Madame Princeton's Anti-fat will do the business. Take a dose now, (*pours out wine glass full*). That will revive you. It operates on the fat glands and allays their abnormal activity. It is excitement of the fat glands which causes excessive flesh. Do you feel better? You've lost, I should say, fifteen pounds the last week.

MRS. C. Madame Princeton, I just feel completely gone. Why, when the girl brought in Mr. Compton's breakfast this morning, I felt like a wild animal. I just wanted to grab his steak and tear it with my fingers and teeth.

MAD. P. But you must not indulge your appetite.

MRS. C. I dare not or Mr. Compton would suspect. Heaven forgive me the lies I've told that man. And I a church member, too. Told him one day I had no appetite, and the next a headache, and the next that I had lunched hastily down town. Dear me, what can I tell him next!

MAD. P. Does he suspect you?

MRS. C. I'm afraid so. He said this morning if I didn't eat pretty soon he'd send for the doctor.

MAD. P. Keep it up three days more and then we'll surprise him. You will have lost at least thirty pounds by that time. Your husband will be delighted at your improved appearance.

MRS. C. I don't know about that. He's a queer man. When I first met him I weighed only ninety pounds. It didn't seem to matter to him when I weighed twice that.

MAD. P. But it does matter. He is deceiving you. Men prefer willowly women.

MRS. C. Maybe, but I've heard him say that Mrs. Smith was as thin as the last run o' June shad. Couldn't you fatten that woman? It would be a relief to her neighbors if you could, and it would prove that you can perform miracles.

MAD. P. Yes, get her to come in. I'll give you a commission. It's very simple. If she'd only take my Anti-lean. All she needs is to have the fat glands stimulated. Anti-lean is the greatest discovery of the age.

MRS. C. Would you mind telling me what it is; in confidence, you know.

MAD. P. Oh, goodness, that is a professional secret.

MRS. C. I'll tell her about it, but, good land, what ye're doin' to me would kill her. I couldn't stand it if I wasn't as strong as an ox.

MAD. P. You are doing bravely. What did you eat for breakfast?

MRS. C. Three oatmeal crackers and a cup of coffee.

MAD. P. You have broken the rules. I limited you to two crackers.

MRS. C. It was Mr. Compton's fault. He insisted I should eat.

MAD. P. Any cream in the coffee?

MRS. C. Only a spoonful.

MAD. P. You must obey me if you expect good results. I'll give you a double dose of Anti-fat. And you shall lunch here to-day. One small white cracker, one large pickle and a double portion of Anti-fat.

MRS. C. Mayn't I have a chalk crayon to nibble at. I'll eat the wax candles next thing.

MAD. P. Oh, you may have all the chalk you want. Now go to the gymnasium. First the rowing apparatus, then the dumb bells and lastly the swinging rings. That'll fetch you round.

MRS. C. If it doesn't kill me. (*Exit D. F.*)

ENTER SUSAN, *L.*

SUSAN. The mutton fat—

MAD. P. Hist! (*Whispers in SUSAN's ear and gives meaning look toward D. F.*)

ENTER MISS TERWILLIGER, *R.*

MAD. P. How do you do, Miss Terwilliger? You are very punctual. Some women have no notion what an engagement means.

MISS T. (*Heavily veiled.*) Madame Princeton, my face pains terribly. I am really alarmed.

MAD. P. (*Coldly.*) I told you there would be some pain. Let me see your face. Removing freckles is rather a painful operation, if done by the quick method. (*MISS T. removes veil, discloses bandage covering the whole of one side of the face. MAD. P. removes bandage, shows one side of face very red the other brown.*) It is working beautifully

MISS T. (*Goes to glass, shrieks.*) Oh, horrors! What a fright! Oh, oh!

MAD. P. Be cool, my dear.

ENTER MRS. C. *from D. F.*

MRS. C. Goodness, what a start you gave me! (*Sees*

Miss T.) Why what on earth are you doing to that girl? Poor child! One side of her face is red as a beet and the other brown as a berry.

MAD. P. Really, Mrs. Compton, there is nothing the matter. That is the way it always works, Miss Terwilliger.

Miss T. But my face is on fire, oh! oh! And I read in the paper that a young lady died here undergoing treatment.

MAD. P. That was all a lie! I'll never let another newspaper reporter interview me as long as I live. Come this way for treatment. (*Going L.*) Madame Compton, go back to your exercises. (*Exeunt MAD. P. and Miss T., L.*)

MRS. C. Well, I'm glad I haven't freckles or warts or whiskers. I never could stand it to be skinned alive, I know. I'm so hungry I could eat a jar of that skin food.

ENTER SUSAN *L.* *Exit* MRS. C., *D. F.*

SUSAN. Silly little goose. She's going to be a bridesmaid and is willing to be skinned in order to look pretty.

ENTER DICKIE BIRD.

DICKIE B. Are you the young lady I spoke to yesterday?

SUSAN. You are Miss Dickie Bird?

DICKIE. I am. I have an appointment at this hour.

SUSAN. I operate on the hair. Take this seat. (*DICKIE seated facing L. so audience can have side view of hair and face; lets down DICKIE's hair, which must be dark and beautiful.*) Oh, what beautiful hair! If I had that hair I wouldn't dye it for the world.

DICKIE. But blondes are so fashionable! They are all the rage, you know. (*Susan tucking the barber's apron closely round DICKIE.*) Does it cause any inconvenience?

SUSAN. Not the least! You can not appear anywhere for several days. (*Scream from Miss T. heard off L.*)

DICKIE. (*Bounding from chair.*) Goodness! What is that?

SUSAN. Oh, nothing. They are skinning a girl in there.

DICKIE. Mercy sakes! Skinning a girl! That is horrible.

SUSAN. (*Laughs.*) You misunderstand. It is the complexion treatment. It takes off the old skin, and I think they took it off that girl pretty deep. It burns like fire at first. (*Another scream.*)

MRS. C. *runs out D. F.*

MRS. C. My nerves just wont stand that!

DICKIE. I'm very glad I don't have to be skinned. Ugh! it makes me shudder. (*Gets in chair.*)

MRS. C. And what are you going to have done?

DICKIE. I'm going to be bleached!

MRS. C. What color?

DICKIE. Why, blonde, of course.

MRS. C. Well, if I had that head of hair I wouldn't bleach it for the world. What lovely hair, and Mr. Compton does so admire hair.

DICKIE. (*Coquettishly.*) They all do. (*Susan getting bottles and brushes.*)

SUSAN. Are you ready, Miss Bird?

DICKIE. Quite ready.

MRS. C. (*Going D. F.*) Bird! That must be Dickie Bird. Giddy thing! She's the worst flirt in town. Oh dear, I could eat a raw frog! (*Exit D. F. Noise of pulleys going furiously.*)

DICKIE. What is that fat old thing doing here?

SUSAN. Improving her shape. She's on Anti-fat.

DICKIE. (*Sarcastically.*) You couldn't reduce her waist with one of those what do you call 'em machines. She's had her day. Why doesn't she stay at home with her old man.

SUSAN. Neither age nor condition is beyond the aid of Madame Princeton. That woman can work miracles. (*DICKIE is now swathed in apron and towels till she looks like a mummy.*)

DICKIE. Why are you so very particular about wrapping me up, Susan?

SUSAN. The stuff is very powerful. I musn't let a single drop get on your skin.

DICKIE. Oh dear, I am nervous. (*Tries to move.*) Mercy, I can't move hand or foot. (*Screams.*)

ENTER, *hastily*, MAD. P., L.

MAD. P. What is the matter, Miss Bird?

DICKIE. I am afraid!

MAD. P. My dear, there isn't the slightest pain or danger. Go on, Susan. (*Aside to SUSAN.*) You've been talking again. Why can't you keep your customers quiet like mine. (*Scream from Miss T. who runs in, one side of face in great red blotches.*)

MISS T. Madame Princeton, you will kill me! Oh, how my face smarts!

MAD. P. It can't hurt much.

MISS T. It's on fire! Oh, oh!

MAD. P. Only a temporary twinge, Miss Terwilliger. (*Gets between DICKIE'S chair and Miss T., turns latter away, nods to SUSAN who busies herself with DICKIE.*) To-day I will apply my great discovery, Pastilla di Pasta and to-morrow you will have the complexion of a baby. (*Rushes Miss T. out L., shuts door.*) Some people make a great fuss about nothing.

ENTER MRS. C., *with played-out look*, D. F.

MRS. C. Madame Princeton, haven't I exercised enough to-day?

MAD. P. (*Severely.*) Not half enough!

MRS. C. (*Puffing.*) Well, I shall die, that's what I'll do!

MAD. P. (*Impatiently.*) I wouldn't if I were you, Mrs. Compton.

MRS. C. Madame Princeton, you are positively cruel! I believe you actually enjoy our sufferings.

MAD. P. That's right, excite yourself! Your heart is strong and excitement reduces flesh. It stimulates the lean glands, just as repose invigorates the fat glands.

MRS. C. But s'pose I die right here in your place. Think of the consequences. One woman did die.

MAD. P. No, she didn't.

DICKIE. Goodness, that woman makes me nervous. Talks of dying in the place. I can't stand this any longer. (*Tries to rise.*)

SUSAN. (*Restraining her.*) Be careful, you'll make me spill it and then—

MAD. P. Susan, hold your tongue.

DICKIE. I am afraid. (*Manages to stand up, swathed like a mummy, MAD. and SUSAN support her.*)

MAD. P. Sit down, Miss Bird. The remedy is as harmless as water.

DICKIE. I am *so* nervous, let me go home. I read of the girl that nearly died here.

MAD. P. (*Indignantly.*) No such thing ever happened, I tell you. She only fainted.

DICKIE. But papa doesn't know what I'm doing. He wouldn't approve at all. And if anything more should happen and *my* name get in the papers—

MAD. P. Nothing can happen. How absurd. (*They get DICKIE back in chair.*)

MRS. C. I am nervous, too. If Mr. Compton ever caught me here, oh dear.

MAD. P. Mrs. Compton, I beg you will act rationally. Go back to your pulleys! It is against the rules for one patient to enter the room where another is being operated on.

MRS. C. Humph! I can hear the racket of all of 'em. I'll break that old machine. (*Exit D. F., noise of pulleys violently.*)

ENTER MISS MCFADDEN, *R.*

Miss McF. Do I have the pleasure of addressing Madame Princeton?

MAD. P. (*Bows.*) You do. Won't you come into the reception room? It's a mistake of the girl to show you in here. Your name?

Miss McF. Miss McFadden. Since we are here I think we can manage. I have but a moment.

MAD. P. Did you wish to enquire about treatment, Miss McFadden?

Miss McF. Yes, if you please.

MAD. P. Complexion, perhaps?

Miss McF. Exactly! My skin feels rather harsh at times.

MAD. P. You need my crowning discovery, the wonderful skin food, followed by Pastilla di Pasta.

Miss McF. I had thought of trying something of the kind. (MAD. P. *showing vase of "food."*) How much?

MAD. P. Five dollars a jar.

Miss McF. Isn't that rather expensive?

MAD. P. Excuse me, it is worth twice the money. I ought to charge ten dollars. The materials are very costly, and the secret is invaluable.

Miss McF. I'll take a jar! (*Gives money.*)

MAD. P. (*Smiling.*) Anything else?

Miss McF. No, that is, yes, my sister has a wart on her nose, which disfigures her slightly!

MAD. P. That can easily be removed.

Miss McF. Will it leave a scar?

MAD. P. Oh dear, no! I never leave a blemish! In fact I improve on nature in her happiest moods, to such a state of perfection has my art attained.

Miss McF. (*Has been writing in note book.*) Will it be a painful operation?

MAD. P. Not at all! My customers actually enjoy the various processes, just as they say men enjoy being shaved and having their heads rubbed.

Miss McF. My sister may come in—(*Loud screams L.*) What is that? (*Terrific crash back of flat. SUSAN drops bottle.*)

MAD. P. Mercy! What has happened?

DICKIE. (*Jumping up from chair.*) There! you've spilled some on my hand! (*Struggles free from wraps, throwing them right and left.*)

MAD. P. (*Throwing up hands.*) Miss Bird! Miss Bird! Do be careful!

DICKIE. It is black as ink. This is disgraceful, Madame Princeton.

MAD. P. Oh dear, Susan! Wash it off quick with the stain remover!

ENTER MISS TERWILLIGER, *L.*

MISS T. (*Indignantly.*) Madame Princeton, I won't stand this any longer! (*One side of her face covered by a thick plaster the other shockingly red.*) My face is on fire.

MAD. P. But, Miss Terwilliger, patience. You will look like a baby when I am done with you.

ENTER MRS. C. *puffing, D. F.*

MISS T. I'm burning up. (*Hands to face.*)

MRS. C. Throw water on her, she's afire!

MAD. P. Water, indeed!

MRS. C. She looks like a boiled lobster now! Did you ever see such a face?

MISS MCF. But the process is painless?

MAD. P. Quite so, her nerves are unstrung, poor thing. (*Miss MCF. writing in note book.*) What are you writing there?

MISS MCF. Only your address.

MISS T. (*Rubbing face.*) Oh, my face! Will it ever look right again?

MAD. P. Don't rub it!

MISS T. But I can't help it!

MAD. P. My dear, you will look like a June rose.

DICKIE. And my hand, look at the great horrid black spot. (*Exposes hand.*)

MAD. P. It'll all come off in a month.

DICKIE. A month, did you say! Oh, I can't endure it that long.

MRS. C. Humph, I've been starving that long. Some people make a great fuss about nothing!

DICKIE. But I must go to the charity ball next week!

MAD. P. Mrs. Compton, you have thirty minutes yet. The rings are next.

MRS. C. Oh sugar! Maybe you think I'm a fool! I'm done with your old machine. I smashed it with the Indian clubs.

MAD. P. Smashed the machine! You shall pay for it. Indeed, you shall.

MRS. C. Oh, I'll pay. And what's more, I'll eat if I have to weigh 300 pounds.

MAD. P. That's what you will weigh.

MRS. C. (*Spiritedly.*) Well, I won't get fat to please you. I am not going to eat if I die for it.

DICKIE. Oh, that stain! It'll never come off I know.

MISS T. Oh, my face!

MRS. C. Oh, my stomach!

MAD. P. (*Emphatically.*) Oh, my patience!

MISS MCF. Yes, your patients. (*Writes.*) Quite an interesting lot.

MAD. P. (*Sternly.*) Young woman, what *are* you writing?

MISS MCF. Just a little item. I am a reporter for the "Daily Fudge."

ALL. A reporter! (*Excitement, "oh's" and "dear me's."*)

DICKIE. My name in the papers! Papa will never forgive me! (*Darts out R., Miss T. darts out L.*)

MRS. C. Mr. Compton will be furious. To think! Our names in the paper.

MAD. P. (*Glaring.*) Do it if you dare, young woman. She doesn't dare. I'll sue the "Fudge" for damages.

MRS. C. (*To Miss MCF.*) I'm as weak as a cat, or I'd choke you, you horrid thing! Yes I would. (*Glares at Miss MCF. who stands coolly writing.*) My name in the "Daily Fudge!" And that horrid Anti-fat!

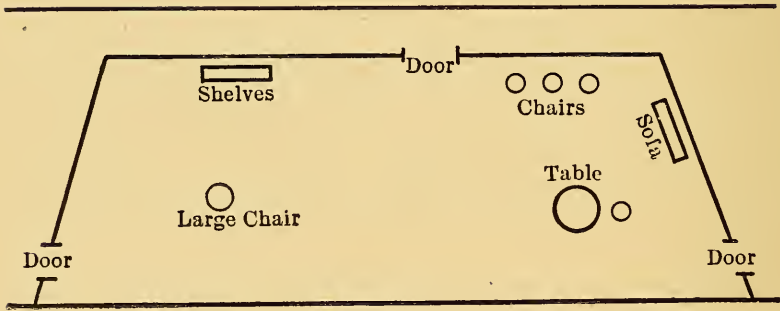
MAD. P. After all ladies like their names in the papers. It won't hurt anything. It advertises business.

TABLEAU.

<i>R.</i>	<i>C.</i>	<i>L.</i>
MISS MCF.,	SUSAN,	MRS. C., MAD. P.

QUICK CURTAIN.

MADAME PRINCETON'S
TEMPLE OF BEAUTY.



A DUDE IN A CYCLONE

A FARCE

BY T. S. DENISON

Author of

Odds with the Enemy, Initiating a Granger, Wanted, a Correspondent, A Family Strike, Seth Greenback, Louva, the Pauper, Hans Von Smash, Borrowing Trouble, Two Ghosts in White, The Pull-Back, Country Justice, The Assessor, The Sparkling Cup, Our Country, Irish Linen Peddler, The School Ma'am, Kansas Immigrants, An Only Daughter, Too Much of a Good Thing, Under the Laurels, Hard Cider, The Danger Signal, Wide Enough for Two, Pets of Society, Is the Editor In? The New Woman, Patsy O'Wang, Rejected, Only Cold Tea, Madam P's Beauty Parlors, Topp's Twins, A First-Class Hotel, It's all in the Pay-Streak, The Cobbler, A Dude in a Cyclone, Friday Dialogues.

Also the Novels,

The Man Behind, An Iron Crown, etc.

CHICAGO:

T. S. DENISON, PUBLISHER,

163 RANDOLPH STREET

A DUDE IN A CYCLONE.

CHARACTERS.

MAJOR TOWNSLEY, Proprietor of hotel.

JIM FUNK, a "wild and wooly" Texan.

SOLOMON ISAACSTEIN, insurance agent and "bromoter."

ADOLPHUS PUTERBAUGH, from the Manhattan Club,
New Yawk. .

MRS. TOWNSLEY.

PATTIE BAGGS.

JACK AND TOOTSIE.

Time of Playing, twenty minutes.

NOTE—The only difficult part in this play is that of Sol. Isaacstein. He is a Jew of the extreme type. The best study is that of the typical Jew traveling man who is not native born. Isaacstein's dialect is of course exaggerated, as all dialect must necessarily be in farce. One useful hint may be given, i.e., try to get an easy swing to it. To pronounce *der* gombany with nicety of precision spoils the effect entirely. *Der* is not plain *dare* in English. It is more indistinct so that the *d* may be nearly a *t*. The same remarks apply to the dialect of Adolphus.

COPYRIGHT, 1895, BY T. S. DENISON.

A DUDE IN A CYCLONE.

SCENE—*Cyclone cellar in Texas. One door R., blank walls, bench back, all characters discovered, as curtain rises, in state of confusion, some holding lighted candles; footlights out, stage dark.*

TOWNSLEY. Is everybody in? (*Closing door and barring it.*)

MRS. T. Oh John, I'm afraid they're not all in. Jack are you there, an' Tootsie?

JACK. I'm O.K. maw, Tootsie, too.

SOL. I. Boot me down O.K. (*O gay*) too. I set my ziglone alarm, greatest invention of the age. Wendt off an hour ago. Macher, I'll sell you some stock; 50 per zent down, balance—

MRS. T. Where's Pattie Baggs?

MRS. B. I'm here, Mrs. Townsley. And I'm dyin' o' fright. Oh, I wish John was here!

MRS. T. Do you want him here to be blown to fiddle-strings in the cyclone?

MRS. B. But he's on the cyars and it may blow the train off the track.

SOL. I. Tear laty, regomment him to my ziglone ogsident bolicy!

MRS. B. Oh, I shall faint if you go on that way.

ADOLPH. Deah me, is the stom so vewy violent as that?

JIM F. Well, I should say, Puterbaugh! Last cyclone there was an old goose on a nest under the barn. It blew those goose eggs, would you believe it, right through the brick chimney. Holes in the brickwork looked as if there had been a cannonade.

ADOLPH. Dweadful! I'm sowwy (*sorry*) I evah left New Yawk!

SOL I. Mine frent, Nye Yorick vas a great blace, but it ish not in it gombared to Texas.

JIM F. That's what, Isaacstein. A cyclone's not bad. It's a little exciting, but rather enjoyable when you get used to it.

ADOLPH. Weally, you don't say! It must be vewy twyin' on the nerves.

MRS. T. Townsley, is the door barred securely?

TOWN. Yes, my dear.

MRS. T. John, put something more against it. (*A pause.*) You men lean against it.

TOWN. Let the door alone, can't you!

MRS. B. Oh my nerves, they're twitchin' forty ways for Sunday.

MRS. T. Pattie Baggs, can't you keep still? This is a serious time.

SOL. I. Mine frent, vat becomies of dot goose?

JIM F. Oh the goose, that was the strangest thing ever heard of. The cyclone blew that barn all to fliggets and scattered it over half the county and it actooally left that old goose settin' on the same spot with not a feather on her, an' nary an egg under her.

ADOLPH. Did you evah heah the like?

MRS. T. (*To PATTIE.*) Jim Funk couldn't stop tellin' stories if old Nick was at the back door; he had ought to be ashamed of himself.

SOL. I. (*Taking out note book to write.*) Dot was a stranche (*strange*) phenomenon. I will write dem insurance gombanies to stop wridin' bolicies on parns oont wride dem on geoses. Der gombany safes monies oont I get a gommision.

JIM F. A capital idea! Why, it blew so hard last time—

MRS. T. (*Petulantly.*) Major Townsley, can't you men stop talkin'. It's a solemn occasion.

TOWN. Madam, I haven't said a word.

MRS. T. But Dizzie Jim an' that Jew—

TOWN. My dear, they are guests of the hotel. I

can't tell 'em what to say. Jim Funk, this is a serious matter.

JIM F. You bet it is, major.

MRS. B. Oh my nerves—is it comin'? (*Bright flash of lightning.*)

TOWN. (*Peeps at crack in door.*) Dark as Egypt and roarin' like Tophet.

MRS. B. Oh! oh! I shall smother.

MRS. T. Pattie Baggs, keep quiet. Hollerin' aint goin' to stop it. My land, where's Bridget an' Susan. (*Looks round.*) They aint in; Townsley, do go an' fetch them.

TOWN. It's too late now. I guess they have run out the back way and got in Smith's cellar.

MRS. T. But maybe they haven't an' they'll be killed sure.

MRS. B. Oh goodness! If you talk of killing, you'll kill me dead, and John—

TOWN. (*Severely.*) Mrs. Townsley, who is talking now?

MRS. T. But you don't do anything. You just stand there as unconcerned.

TOWN. What can I do?

MRS. T. I wish I was a man.

ADOLPH. This is puffickly dwdedful!

SOL. I. If you blease, macher, a little petter light. (*Getting closer to candle.*) I wrides dem ogsident gombanies to put a goupon on der bolicy, "Not good unless der barty vas in der zellar." Dem gombanies safes monies oont I get a gommission.

MRS. T. (*Suddenly.*) Where's Tootsie?

TOOTSIE. I'm here all right, maw.

JACK T. Yes, I fetched her, you bet. (*JACK goes to door to peep out. Lightning and fierce crash of thunder.*

MRS. T. and MRS. B. scream in concert. ADOLPH starts and stumbles, falling, drops candle.)

JIM F. Hello there, Puterbaugh. (*Helps him up.*) Lightning strike you?

ADOLPH. Weally I cawn't say. I feel so shook up. (*Feels his arms.*)

JIM F. You're all right. That ain't a marker to what we'll get. Why, last cyclone the lightning fell in great balls, as big as your head, that danced round the ground among the hailstones and melted away slowly—them that didn't explode. (*Lightning and another crash of thunder.*) I saw a chunk of it in the chimney corner next day.

ADOLPH. (*Jumping.*) Weally, I cawn't stand that, don't you know. I wish I'd nevah left New Yawk.

SOL. I. Mine frent, you was nerfous. Haf you an ogsident bolicy? I'll write you up. You vas a goot risk, seein you was in der zellar.

ADOLPH. Weally, my fwend, you aw impawtunate. I have me insurance, don't you know, always cawy it same as me cane.

SOL. I. Dot Nye Yorick insurance vas no goot in Dexas. It hasn't got der ziglone goupon.

JACK. (*Going to door.*) Oh Tootsie, come an' look. It's just splendid. Black as ink, an' way off yellow as can be. (*TOOTSIE runs to door.*)

TOOTSIE. Aint that just tip top?

MRS. T. (*Severely.*) Major Townsley, do you see those children?

TOWN. My dear, I see them.

MRS. T. Do you want them killed?

TOWN. Fiddlesticks! Keep still, can't you.

MRS. T. Send them away from that door—if anything happens!

TOWN. (*Goes to door.*) Go, my dears, back to the far corner! (*Looks out.*) Something will happen! It's a grand sight! It's coming like a race-horse!

MRS. B. Oh, Major Townsley, do you want to frighten us all to death!

MRS. T. (*Sarcastically.*) It's no use trying to keep men still.

JIM F. I hope it wont blow this cyclone cellar out of root. (*Fearful hissing of wind with lightning.*)

ADOLPH. Gwacious! do you think it'll do that?

JIM F. No tellin'! Last cyclone—

MRS. T. (*Severely.*) Jim Funk, can't you keep still?

JIM F. Why yes, if it is the wish of the company.
(*Sits on bench back.*)

ADOLPH. *I cawn't keep still, I say now!*

SOL. I. Dot gomes from hafin no insurance! Bedder dake a ziglone bolicy. Dot helps der nerfs bedder.

ADOLPH. (*Scornfully.*) Go away, fellah, weally you annoy me. I'm used to pwivacy.

SOL. I. (*Puts up note book.*) Zome beoples always stands in der vay of der own lidght. (*Taking out book suddenly.*) Say, lantlort! (*No reply.*) Macher Downsley, dis zellar vas boorly lidghted, vy ton't you but in elegdrick lidghts? (*Increased roaring of wind.*) He toesn't hear. (*Goes to T. who is near door, speaks very loud in his ear.*) Macher Downsley!

TOWN. What are you yelling about?

SOL. I. I'll dake a gondract to lidght dis zellar from basement to addig mit elegdrick lidghts. (*Aside.*) I can get a small gommission from der gompany. (*Clap of thunder.*) He gan't hear. It vas a drifle noisy for peesness.

TOWN. Isaacstein, you had better sit down. (*I. sits on bench back.*)

MRS. T. Townsley, how does it look outside?

TOWN. Roaring like all the fiends. The roof of the hotel will go in a minute. There goes the chimneys now!

JACK. (*Runs to door.*) Oh paw, let me see!

TOOTSIE. An' me, too! (*Going.*)

JACK. Go back, Tootsie! (*Pushes her away.*) It aint fur girls.

TOOTSIE. (*Pushing.*) Paw, Jack's pushin' me.

MRS. T. (*Severely.*) Come here, both of you. Major Townsley, do you see those children? And at such a time! Humph, you aint fit to be the father of a family! No more government than a cat—(*clap of thunder.*) Oh! oh!

MRS. B. Save me! save me!

MRS. T. I guess ye aint gone yet.

TOWN. (*To children.*) Run back dears, to the far corner. (*They go L., holding hands.*)

TOOTSIE. Jack, I'm afraid.

JACK. Don't be skart, Tootsie. Paw an' me's here.

ADOLPH. (*Who will not sit down, suddenly.*) Oh, I say, majah, say, don't you know! (*Goes to TOWN.*) He cawn't heah. Majah!

TOWN. Speak louder!

ADOLPH. (*Shouting in T.'s ear*) Me twunk!

TOWN. (*Gruffly.*) What's the matter now?

ADOLPH. I fohgot me twunk, don't you know.

TOWN. Trunk! What on earth do you want with your trunk?

ADOLPH. It contains all me linen and things. Let me out! I must have it! (*Looks at watch.*) It's the houah to change me tie.

TOWN. (*Restraining him.*) Mr. Puterbaugh, you can't go out in that storm. Hear the roaring. (*Groaning of the wind loudly.*)

ADOLPH. But I change me linen twice a day, don't you know.

JIM F. (*Jumping up.*) I'll loan you a shirt!

ADOLPH. Thanks awfully, but I nevah weah flannel, besides what would you do, I say now?

JIM F. Do you think I have only *one* shirt!

SOL. I. (*Jumping up.*) Mine frent, my vardrobe vas limited, but it is at your disbosal.

ADOLPH. Thanks, awfully, but I cawn't weah percale, it'stwo dweadful! (*To TOWN.*) Don't you think I could dwag me twunk into this cave? (*At door.*)

TOWN. (*Pushing him away.*) Why, you lunatic! you wouldn't risk your life for a trunk would you?

ADOLPH. (*Hopping round.*) I'm dwedfully nervous! I haven't been so excited since the day I thweatened to cane Gawge Bowkah in the Manhattan Club. In sulted me, the cad! They had to westwain me, and all that. Adolphus Putehbaugh was the hero of the houah. Got hauled up befoah the diwectahs and all that. Made me a weputation as a dangewous man, don't you know—(*Clap of thunder.*) Gwacious! that's comin' it stwong!

SOL. I. (*Rushes forward.*) Mine frent, vil you dake dot bolicy now? No dime like der bresent. Telay is

tangerous. I tell you vot I'll do. (*Whispers in his ear.*) Half der gommission! (*Begins writing.*) Gristian name Adolphus— Age?

TOWN. (*At door.*) There goes the roof! (*All jump up.*)

MRS. B. Land sakes, I'm goin', too!

MRS. T. (*Jerking her back on seat.*) No you aint! Patty Baggs, don't be a fool.

MRS. B. Oh, if John were only here!

SOL. I. My tear laty, in dis case distance vas der pest bolicy—exzepting always der ziglone bolicy.

MRS. T. If the roof is gone how will we manage for dinner, I'd like to know?

TOWN. (*Snorting.*) Dinner! That's like a woman.

MRS. T. Yes, and it's like a man to say nothing till he's hungry as a wolf, and then he expects it in two minutes.

JIM F. Never mind, Mrs. Townsley, we'll get along somehow.

MRS. T. Humph! There aint a man in the county that has a better appetite than you have.

JACK. Maw al'ays said 'at Dizzy Jim was a dandy to eat!

TOWN. Boy, keep still there.

SOL. I. (*Peering out.*) Macher Downsley, dot roof was gone sure enough. Say, I'll dake a gondragt to repuild dot hotel on a scale of magnifizence suitable to dis greadt state of Dexas.

TOWN. You a contractor, too? I thought your line was insurance.

SOL. I. Haf you not my gardt alretty? (*Gets card.*) Read dot gardt. "Solomon Isaacstein, Bromoter." I bromotes eferyding from ziglone bolicies to hodels oont shtock gombanies. Wherefer dere was gommissions dere was Isaacstein retty for peesness.

TOWN. Wait till we find out the damages.

SOL. I. Mine frent, der bresent is der only dime. Der bast was brotested oont der future disgounted. I'll figger on dot gondragt now oont have an esdimate ven der ziglone subsites. (*ADOLPH drops his candle.*)

Dem gandles wasn't equal to such an occasion as der bresent. Macher, haf you consiteret dot broposition for elegdrick lights in dis ziglone zellar? (*Tremendous flash and splitting thunder.*)

ADOLPH. (*Who was nervously trying to light his candle drops it panic stricken.*) I say now this is gettin' to be a beastly boah.

SOL. I. Frent Puterbaugh, allow me. (*Lights match.*) You vas standin' in your own lighdt, my tear sir.

ADOLPH. I should say that I'm standing in me own dark. (*Laughs.*) Aw, wathaw good joke that, best I've made since I left New Yawk. You cawn't make a good joke in this blawsted country. Climate so vewy depwessing. We're an awfully witty lot of chaps in the Manhattan Club.

JIM F. (*At door.*) How is it outside, major? (JIM and T. look out intently.)

SOL. I. (*Lighting A.'s candle after some trouble.*) Der glimate vas hart on matches in Dexas. Mine frent, a goot shoke is ter best donic for te nerfs excebt a ziglone bolicy—

ADOLPH. I say now Mistah—ah, I cawn't quite wecall youah name.

SOL. I. Solomon Isaacstein, Bromoter, Nye Yorick oont San Franzisco. (*Confidentially.*) Let me make a broposition, der macher vas a little slow.

ADOLPH. He keeps a beastly place heah, don't you know.

SOL. I. (*Enthusiastically with the Jew gestures of the comic papers.*) Ogzactly, ogzactly, but petter oxpressed dan I could oxpress it. Dis blace vas not up mit der dimes even for Dexas. It needs elegdrick lights (*suddenly struck by idea*) oont, py chorge, (*slaps A.'s shoulder till latter staggers*) vat you say to pilliarts in dis zellar?

ADOLPH. By Jove! Good idea, don't you know.

SOL. I. Sugchest it to Macher Downsley. My prud der Abe Isaacstein makes pilliart dables. He gives a tiscount of dwenty per zent to der drade, put I makes Abe gif me sefenty-five per zent. I'll tifide dot gom-

mission. (*Crash of thunder, lightning.*) Himmel, vat a noise.

MRS. B. I know we'll all be killed.

MRS. T. Pattie Baggs, are you hankering to be killed?

MRS. B. Oh Mrs. Townsley, how can you talk so?

MRS. T. Keep still, then. (*Aside.*) That poor dude's nearly scared to death already.

JIM F. (*At door.*) There she goes.

MRS. T. The hotel?

JIM F. No, the stable. (*Enthusiastically.*) Look at that!

CHORUS What is it?

JACK. (*Runs.*) Lemme see.

TOWN. Sit down, will you, boy.

JIM F. Aint that great! Aint it?

MRS. B. Do tell us, Jim. (*Pause.*)

JIM F. Why, that old brindle mule. When the stable went it riled him so he's got his grit up an', dum me, if he aint just kickin' the cyclone to strings right an' left; he's splittin' it wide open.

ADOLPH. Gwacious me!

JIM F. But it'll git the better of 'im, I 'low. He's gittin old an' short-winded an' that cyclone holds a full hand. There goes a cabin. Look at it, major. Why, I'll be shot if there aint three coon skins nailed on the door an' a nigger smokin' a pipe, as cool as patent ice.

ADOLPH. Gwacious, my twunk!

SOL. I. Oont no inzurance? No? I'll write an emerchency bolicy for fifty per zent extra.

TOWN. Jim, you've a good eye to see coon skins in that light.

JIM F. (*Looks again.*) Hanged, if I wasn't mistaken. It's fox skins. Might a knowed that by the rings on the tails. Old Brindle's knocked out! No, he isn't. He's taken a hitch round an apple tree with his tail. There goes the tree, roots an' all, an' the mule holdin' on by his tail. The cabin's out o' sight now.

MRS. B. Mercy me, Jim, d'ye see any cyars? John's in the cyars.

JIM F. No, Mrs. Baggs, I don't see no cyars, but if there doesn't go half a mile o' track sailin' along over the tree tops.

MRS. B. Mercy on us! I'll bet the cyars is wrecked an' John's hurt. Oh Jim—

JIM. Don't be skeared, mom! The cyars didn't get into the cyclone, only the locomotive. It's still runnin' nateral as life. The fireman's heavin' in coal.

ADOLPH. I weally cawn't get back to New Yawk without me twunk.

SOL. I. Ton't co pack py Nye Yorick yet, mine frent. You haf not seen half ter peauties of dis great gountry alretty.

JIM. T. There it's about over now. Major Townsley, I'll bet three to one that old mule doesn't get back inside three days. It took him two days last time an' he's gittin' old an' stiff. *(Gets lighter.)*

SOL. I. *(To ADOLPH.)* Mine frent, dot was a'coot pet. We'll make up a little zindigate oont dry it. Jim, I dakes ten tollars vort of dot pet, hants town. *(Gets daylight again.)*

MRS. T. Townsley, is the hotel gone?

TOWN. *(Unbarring door.)* No, only the roof and the chimneys. Jim has been exaggerating slightly.

SOL. I. I suspected oxacheration. I've pin dere pefore. *(Struck with idea.)* Py cracious, I'll ket up an oxacheration bolicy for dis gountry. It would be a vortune properly hantled. *(T. opens door.)*

MRS. T. *(Going toward door.)* Roof gone and dinner ruined.

ADOLPH. And my twunk gone to the bow wows, an' it's half an howah pawst the time to change me linen. *(All going R., SOL. last, making notes.)*

SOL. I. *(Calls.)* Mr. Bewterpough! Mr. Bewterpough! *(Overtakes A.)* I'll find dot drunk for a slighdt atvance, cash town.

QUICK CURTAIN.

It's All in the Pay-Streak

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY T. S. DENISON

Author of

Odds with the Enemy, Initiating a Granger, Wanted, a Correspondent, A Family Strike, Seth Greenback, Louva, the Pauper, Hans Von Smash, Borrowing Trouble, Two Ghosts in White, The Pull-Back, Country Justice, The Assessor, The Sparkling Cup, Our Country, Irish Linen Peddler, The School Ma'am, Kansas Immigrants, An Only Daughter, Too Much of a Good Thing, Under the Laurels, Hard Cider, The Danger Signal, Wide Enough for Two, Pets of Society, Is the Editor In? The New Woman, Patsy O'Wang, Rejected, Only Cold Tea, Madam P's Beauty Parlors, Topp's Twins, A First-Class Hotel, It's all in the Pay-Streak, The Cobbler, A Dude in a Cyclone, Friday Dialogues.

Also the Novels,

The Man Behind, An Iron Crown, etc.

CHICAGO:

T. S. DENISON, PUBLISHER,

163 RANDOLPH STREET.

IT'S ALL IN THE PAY STREAK.

CHARACTERS.

JOHN LAWTON.

FLOSSIE, his young daughter.

HERBERT, his son, an outcast.

HARVEY VANCE, Flossie's accepted lover.

JIM ROGERS, alias "Pay Streak," a rustler.

MOLLIE BAKER, alias "The Rocky Mountain Grouse."

RACHEL, old family servant of Lawton's.

Time of playing, one hour, forty minutes.

PROPERTIES.

Ring for Florence, money, architect's plan, two pistols, dishes, towels, skillet, stove for cabin, gun, card tray, card, oranges in basket, two cots, blankets, newspaper, cartridge belt.

COSTUMES.

The costumes of this play are all "of the day" except the make-up of ROGERS and VANCE in the mountains, Act II. These are: Brown coarse overalls and blouse or roundabout. (Blue will answer, but is not right.) Cartridge belt when worn is heavy and full of cartridges; slouch hats, black or white, to taste; very heavy boots (not shoes), very dusty; overalls may be in boot tops or not; for variety, one each way will do. VANCE may have very long whiskers or stubble. PAY STREAK is more juvenile and may be shaven. Face very brown. Clothing greasy and smeared with clay.

HINTS ON PRESENTATION.

This play has been written from mining life and hotel life as the author has actually found it, except

that miners employ a very energetic and picturesque profanity which can not be reproduced in a play. One caution is necessary in the characters of "Pay Streak" and the "Rocky Mountain Grouse." The man is not a *clown* and the girl is not *coarse*. Miners are serious people, and however ludicrous their conversation and actions may appear to outsiders, to themselves it is earnestness. A man who will stand up and die in defense of his claim must be an earnest man. The other characters need no special elucidation. Great care must be taken, in the duel scene, to use blank cartridges. Any mistake here may prove real tragedy.

BILL OF THE PLAY.

ACT I. The outcast brother. His return. The engagement ring. The terrible mistake.

ACT II. Cabin of ROGERS & VANCE, Gunnison county, Colorado. "There's a man lookin' for pard." The meeting. The duel. Too late.

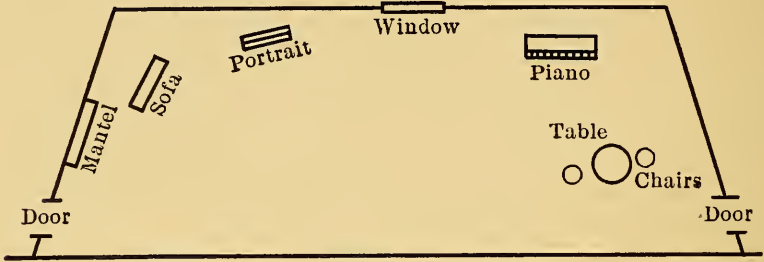
ACT III. Hotel, Indian River, Florida. Two wanderers and a bride and groom. The unexpected meeting. Reconciliation. "Look for the Pay Streak."

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

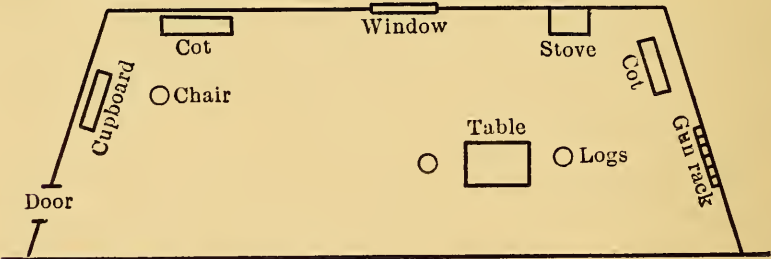
R. means right of the stage; *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *1 E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance, etc.; *D. F.*, door in flat or back of the stage. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

IT'S ALL IN THE PAY STREAK.

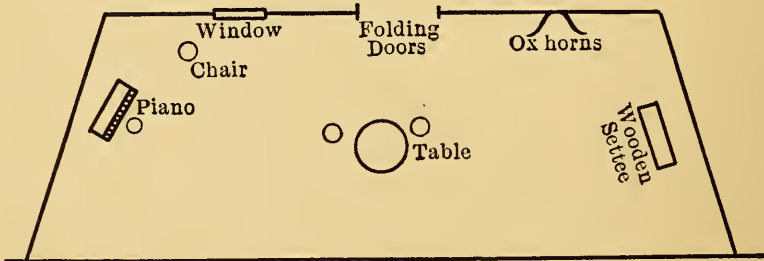
Act I



Act II



Act III



IT'S ALL IN THE PAY STREAK.

SCENE—*Home of the Lawton's, entrance R. and L. in 1. Window in flat C., piano up L. by flat, sofa up R., table down L. C. with chairs. Portrait of lady on flat R. of window, flowers on mantel piece R. In this play L. always means L 1, and R., R 1. Discovered as curtain rises, Flossie reading note. Lamp lighted on table.*

FLOSSIE. What am I to do? (*Reads.*) "Meet me at eight at the old oak by the spring." The poor boy doesn't know that the grove is cut down and the whole place built up with cottages. Five years since he left, and we thought he was dead. He must be desperate to come back like this and take the chance of meeting father. Poor boy! Papa is so unrelenting. Snapped Rachel up for even mentioning Herbert's name once. And he was always Rachel's pet. Oh, if she doesn't find him! I ought to have gone myself, but I was afraid. He'll think that I, too, never forgave him. (*Moves nervously.*) I can hardly wait till Rachel returns. If she doesn't find him—

ENTER MR. LAWTON, R.

LAW. Daughter, is my paper here?

FLO. It is on the table, papa. (*LAW. seats by table.*)

LAW. Rachel is very careless lately. I always want my paper in the library. I've spent half the time I had to read looking for it.

FLO. I'm very sorry, papa.

LAW. Florence, you don't hold a very firm rein. The servants run the house. (*Reading.*)

FLO. But papa, Rachel has been here ever since I can remember. Why shouldn't she manage? She

knows everything about housekeeping much better than I.

LAW. You are too easy, child. Your mother always allowed herself to be imposed on through sheer good nature.

FLO. Why, papa, nobody imposes on me. Rachel is almost a mother to me.

LAW. You must be firm. It may do with Rachel, but the others— (*looks up.*) Why Flossie, bless me, what ails you? (FLO. *wipes eyes.*) I didn't mean to scold, but really—there now, never mind. Perhaps I spoke too sharply.

FLO. Dear fathêr, you have always been so good, but— (*pause.*)

LAW. (*Gazing at her.*) But what, Flossie? Don't mind me. I forgot that you are scarcely more than a child.

FLO. (*With slight opposition.*) I'm *not* a child. I am eighteen. I want to be treated as a woman.

LAW. (*Laughs.*) Very well, Miss Florence Lawton, what does my young lady want?

FLO. I want— (*nervously*) I want a great deal.

LAW. All young ladies do nowadays. A new gown, or diamonds possibly?

FLO. Can't a woman think of anything besides dress?

LAW. Some women can't.

FLO. If mother were living and asked you something seriously, you wouldn't treat her that way.

LAW. (*Rises takes her hands tenderly.*) Child, there is something on your mind, speak freely. As I see you before me, I see the image of your dear mother. Flossie, when you ask, you ask for *two*.

FLO. Then, dearest papa, may I ask a very—very great favor? So great that—I'm afraid to ask it.

LAW. (*Seriously.*) Why, my child, what is the matter?

FLO. (*Looks at him intently.*) Nothing much. (*With feeling.*) Dear papa—

LAW. Speak out. Am I such an ogre as to frighten my own child. Why make so much ado about it?

(*Pause.*) Florence, why don't you speak? Has Mr. Vance been disagreeable?

FLO. (*With downcast eyes.*) It isn't Harvey—how absurd— (*nervously*) Oh papa, do you think that— brother Herbert—

LAW. (*Hardening, short pause, then with effort.*) Daughter, why do you wring my heart like this? That name is forbidden in this house.

FLO. But Herbert is your son and my brother.

LAW. No, I have no son and you have no brother. He disgraced us and then robbed us. He sent your mother to her grave. (*With feeling.*) He is dead.

FLO. But if he were not dead?

LAW. I know what you mean. But he is dead to us. I had some months ago a letter from him which I burned unopened. I've heard enough of his pretended repentance.

FLO. Oh papa—

LAW. Has he written to you?

FLO. He only begs forgiveness. He does not ask for money.

LAW. Florence, I forbid you to communicate with him or speak his name. If he comes back here the prison is ready for him. Flossie, no disobedience, remember.

FLO. Where are you going, papa?

LAW. To the lodge. Good-bye. (*Exit LAW, R.*)

FLO. What can I do? My duty is to a poor, needy, erring brother as well as to my father. And papa is *so* hard on that point.

ENTER RACHEL, L.

FLO. (*Breathlessly.*) Did you find him, Rachel?

RACH. Yes, the poor boy was that glad to see me, he fairly hugged me.

FLO. Where is he?

RACH. He came with me.

FLO. That is dangerous, he may be seen here.

RACH. He would come. He must see you.

FLO. I wonder if I'd know him?

RACH. I'm afraid not, Miss Flossie.

FLO. Is he so changed?

RACH. He looks thin an' tired like.

FLO. Poor Herbert! Did he ask about me or papa?

RACH. You first! The poor child was wanderin' round like a stray sheep. He didn't know that the old place was sold for lots. It seemed to make him sad.

FLO. Rachel, what shall we do?

RACH. Did you speak to Mr. Lawton?

FLO. Yes, and papa frightened me. He seemed so bitter—and so hurt.

RACH. I'll tell him I think he is too harsh.

FLO. No, Rachel, leave that to me.

RACH. Then Herbie will have to wait. If you don't mind my sayin' it, he did act pretty bad.

FLO. But we must forgive, always, Rachel.

RACH. Land, haven't I cried for him many's the time. Your mother and I often spoke of him between ourselves.

FLO. Where is he now?

RACH. In the kitchen.

FLO. I'll see him here. He shall never say that his only sister received him in the kitchen.

RACH. But the risk, Miss Florence.

FLO. Papa is at the lodge, and I expect no one this evening. How does he look, Rachel? Do you think I'll know him?

RACH. I guess not. In fact, he's desprit shabby.

FLO. Then we must give him some clothes. Papa has plenty, and I think they are about of a size.

RACH. Yes, I think they be. Shall I fix him up a little?

FLO. Yes, get papa's last year's gray suit. I'll be there in a minute. I'll see what money I have. (*Takes out purse. Exit RACH. L.*) Dear me! I've only a pitiful two dollars and some silver. I've been too extravagant.

ENTER HARVEY VANCE, *R.*

VANCE. Good evening, Flossie.

FLO. (*Drops purse.*) Oh, Mr. Vance, you startled me.

VANCE. (*Gallantly picks up pocketbook.*) Mister Vance! You are very formal. I used to be Harvey.

FLO. (*Embarrassed.*) But I didn't expect you.

VANCE. Of course not. I thought I'd surprise you. (*Notices her.*) Why, Flossie, are you ill? You are trembling like a leaf. (*Be seated, offers to help her to a seat; she gently repulses him.*)

FLO. (*Hesitates.*) I didn't expect you.

VANCE. I don't see why my sudden appearance should affect you that way, since we are to be married in a month.

FLO. Pardon me, Harvey. I—I think I—

VANCE. (*Anxiously.*) My dear, you are ill! Do sit down. (*She refuses as before.*)

FLO. I am not ill—only—(*with effort*) I am cross to-night.

VANCE. (*Laughs lightly.*) If that is all I'll talk you into a good humor. I have the plan of our new house here. It will be the finest on the hill. I've had that staircase changed. I wish to see if it meets your approval. It must go to the contractors by to-night's mail; that's why I came.

ENTER RACHEL, *door L, then about to withdraw suddenly.*

FLO. Rachel!

RACH. Miss Florence? (*Putting in head again.*)

FLO. I'll give the orders later.

RACH. Yes, Miss! (*Exit.*)

VANCE. (*Sits at table.*) Sit down, Flossie. This plan has been altered since—

FLO. Harvey, please—I cannot look at the plan to-night!

VANCE. Why not?

FLO. I am not in the mood. Excuse me please.

VANCE. But it must go immediately!

FLO. Send it! I don't care about the changes!

VANCE. But you did care.

FLO. I don't care now.

VANCE (*Anxiously.*) Don't care now? Our own house? Why, Florence!

FLO. I mean I can't look at it now.

VANCE. (*Rises.*) Florence, don't you think you are just a little bit capricious sometimes?

FLO. (*Nervously.*) Perhaps! Why not? Must a woman smile always?

VANCE. Flossie, you don't want to see me to-night, that is plain.

FLO. Harvey, you men are so exacting. There are times when one wants to—to be let alone.

VANCE. There now! We'll not quarrel. We have never quarreled yet. I thought you'd like to see me—I mean the plan. But you don't.

FLO. Why don't you show it to papa? He's at the lodge. Go and meet him.

VANCE. I don't think he is interested in it very much. But I guess I'll try it.

FLO. (*Pleased.*) Oh, do Harvey.

VANCE. Florence, excuse my thoughtlessness. I have intruded. I beg pardon. I see there are times when even a man's sweetheart isn't interested in his plans.

FLO. (*Coaxingly.*) Harvey, don't be absurd.

VANCE. I am not absurd. I've only been thoughtless, that's all. (*Going R.*) Good night.

FLO. Good night. (*Goes to door with him.*) I'm so sorry. (*Exit VANCE, R.*) There's a narrow escape and what *will* Harvey think of me. I have actually been rude. Why, he left his plan after all! (*Goes L., calls RACHEL.*)

ENTER RACHEL, L.

FLO. The coast is clear, Rachel, I actually feel guilty. If papa should return—

RACH. Shall I bring him in?

FLO. Yes, be quick. (*Exit RACHEL, L.*) I must get him away. To think that he must be driven like a tramp from his own home.

ENTER HERBERT, L. *He advances and then stands with down-cast look.*

FLO. Oh Herbert, dear brother! (*Advances toward him.*) Why, Herbie, can't you speak to me?

HERB. (*Advances.*) Little Flossie!

FLO. Not so little now! (*Grasping both his hands, hesitates.*) I thought you might kiss your sister.

HERB. Flossie, can you forgive me? (*Kisses her.*)

FLO. Am I not your sister?

HERB. (*Admiring her.*) How you have grown! and how pretty you are! Just the image of mother. (*Starts, wipes away tear.*) Dare I ask her forgiveness, too? I cannot look her in the face.

FLO. Oh Herbert!

HERB. What is it, Flossie? How strange you look! Where is mother?

FLO. (*Takes him gently by the hand and leads him to portrait.*) There!

HERB. (*Looks at picture then at FLO., staggers to chair.*) Dead! God forgive me, I killed her. (*Buries his face in his hands.*)

FLO. (*With handkerchief to eyes, in broken voice.*) Herbert, we must all die. She is happy now.

HERB. And I, miserable wretch, repaid her love with disobedience. I broke her heart.

FLO. (*Gently takes his hand.*) Brother, have you asked God to forgive you?

HERB. Yes, but my prayers are in vain.

FLO. No, God forgives, and she has forgiven. She died with your name on her lips.

HERB. (*Moved.*) I must go now. For months I have dwelt upon the time when I could fall on my knees at her side and ask her forgiveness. Now there is only the hard world for me. And father—

FLO. You must not see him yet.

HERB. He is still relentless? I do not blame him, but he might have written me that she was dead—

FLO. We thought—

HERB. (*Looks at her.*) You thought I was dead, too? I wish I had died.

FLO. Herbert, you are still young, there is time yet.

HERB. Too late. I know father too well. He never

will forgive me. When I took mother's jewels—that turned his heart to stone.

FLO. Dear brother, I will win him over if you give me time. But he must know that you have truly repented. What are you doing now?

HERB. God knows, I am trying. I have had hard luck. I came to the door like a tramp. And here I am in *his* clothes. I'd sooner beg than take them, but Rachel made me put them on.

FLO. But you have been earning something.

HERB. (*Bitterly.*) Something! Yes, fifteen dollars per month in a livery stable and sleep in the stable.

FLO. Oh Herbert!

HERB. And I lost that job three months ago. Times were so hard they couldn't keep me.

FLO. Have you no money?

HERB. (*Bitterly.*) Money! and out of work so long! Florence, you don't know the world.

FLO. I'll give you some. But I have so little, only two dollars. Take that. (*Gives money.*)

HERB. (*Smiling.*) I suppose you'll think I want to work the family for money. That is about all I ever did.

FLO. Nonsense, Herbie. I only wish I had more. Isn't there some friend?

HERB. Friend! (*Laughs bitterly.*) *Friends!* Mine all quit me when my money was done.

FLO. (*Suddenly.*) Oh, I know of one, he'll help you.

HERB. I haven't a friend in the world. Who is he, Flossie?

FLO. (*Hesitating.*) A friend of—of the family. A good friend.

HERB. (*Pause, he regards her.*) A very good friend?

FLO. Yes, the noblest friend in the world.

HERB. (*Smiling.*) I begin to see, little sister. Going to marry him?

FLO. Yes, next month.

HERB. Lucky fellow!

FLO. And then papa will be lonely and he may—I'll try my best.

HERB. He never will, not for years anyway, if ever. Who is your friend?

FLO. Harvey Vance. You don't know him. He is a new man who started a carriage factory here. He doesn't even know that I have a brother.

HERB. You had better tell him, Flossie. Don't keep anything back. He mightn't like it if he heard afterwards from some one else.

FLO. I don't like to speak against you.

HERB. Then just say there is a black sheep in the family. If he wants to know more, he'll ask.

FLO. Oh, he is so honorable, he'd never ask; and he'll help you.

HERB. I'd rather work my own way. I look pretty well in these clothes, though they are not exactly a fit. The governor is stouter than he used to be.

FLO. Papa is very well and strong.

HERB. (*Laughs.*) Yes, and I imagine it wouldn't be healthy for me if he caught me here.

FLO. Oh no, and—I can't tell you—but you must go. And you must leave town, too.

HERB. I can't leave town on two dollars unless I tramp it. And that puts me back beyond hope. If I could only get to Chicago. Times are improving and I might get work.

FLO. How much do you need?

HERB. I couldn't do with less than twenty dollars.

FLO. And I've been such an extravagant little goose. I've spent all my money. My jewels—

HERB. (*Starting.*) Jewels! My God, don't mention jewels!

FLO. Pardon me Herbie, I forgot.

HERB. Rachel always has money.

FLO. But it is all in the savings bank. She deposited to day

HERB. I'll wait till to-morrow.

FLO. No, no, you must not wait till to-morrow. You must go to-night.

HERB. (*Bitter feeling returning.*) But why are you all so anxious to get rid of me. I'll go soon enough.

FLO. I can't tell you! Papa—

HERB. (*Starting.*) I remember now. (*Bitterly.*) Prison! He threatened me. No, there is no place here for me.

FLO. There is no way but the jewels. Papa gave me a necklace.

HERB. Never! I'll never touch his money after that threat. I'll tramp first. Perhaps he'd like to have his son a tramp. Perhaps the people of this town would like to see me further disgraced, curse them.

FLO. Herbert! Herbert, how can you speak so? But you must go.

HERB. Yes, I must go. Ha! ha! I'll go. The governor will soon be back from the lodge and he—no I can't say anything against him for I have wronged him too deeply. (*Pause, looks at her ring.*) Florence, that ring is worth one hundred dollars. I could easy get twenty on it.

FLO. But that is *his* ring, my engagement ring. I couldn't part with that.

HERB. No, of course not, Flossie. Forgive me for suggesting such a thing. I'll try to get along somehow.

FLO. Go to the next town, keep quiet, and I'll send the money.

HERB. Everybody knows me there.

ENTER VANCE, *R.*, *unobserved, stops surprised.*

FLO. Of course! I could meet you somewhere. (*Vance surprised stops.*)

HERB. That might be arranged, but where?

FLO. I'm afraid I couldn't get away to-morrow. (*Vance puzzled, moves as if to go out.*)

HERB. Dear Flossie, I'll leave it all to you. You are my only hope. (*Vance struck with suspicion stops, then stands like a statue.*)

FLO. Herbert, I shall never give you up, no matter what happens. I think of you night and day. (*Vance hand to head with gesture of anguish.*) Pshaw! this is no time for hesitation. (*Takes off ring.*) Take this! If

he misses it I'll make some excuse. It's easy enough to put him off. (*They go L.*)

VANCE. (*With anguish, low tone.*) Oh God! my ring!

FLO. (*Turns, sees V., screams.*) Oh! Mr. Vance, how you startle me! Why did you come in that way?

VANCE. (*In husky voice.*) I startle you! Heaven help me! What have you done to me? Stabbed me to the heart.

FLO. Oh, Mr. Vance, please—

VANCE. Save your words, false woman, traitress, shameless creature, you drove me away to meet *him* here. (*FLO. totters back grasping chair. VANCE advances in a furious passion.*) Oh the shame! Woman! woman! (*She shrinks back speechless*) I could strangle such a viper. (*Drops his hands, head falls on breast.*) No, I can't strike her for I loved her. Traitress, farewell! (*FLO. drops senseless.*)

HERB. Help! Rachel! (*Dropping on knees beside FLO., raises her head.*) Coward! Wretch! You shall answer for this.

VANCE. (*With passionate scorn and deliberation.*) Yes, I'll answer, and I'll kill you at sight like a dog.

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT. II.

SCENE—*Mining camp in Rocky Mountains. Cabin set to show interior. Door R. in 1. Rude cot near R. corner, and another in L.; stove with skillet against rear wall, L. C.; plank cupboard against side wall R.; window flat between stove and cot; rough pine table down C., with seats at either side, of sawed log; rough chair, rocks on table, gun on hooks, L.; overalls, etc., on floor and on nails; coffee pot, very dirty towel, etc., etc. PAY STREAK discovered as curtain rises, sewing buttons on overalls, business of threading needle and tangling thread.*

PAY S. That pesky thread is enough to rile ole Job, I reckon. It takes my pard to sew on buttons. He goes at it 'sif he'd been a tailor in his time. He's the coolest cuss in camp anyway. Wy, when we struck it

rich in the "Little Lucy" lode what did he do? Jump round an' holler an' say, "Boys, we've got it bigger'n an elephant?" Nary time; jest said, "I 'low if it holds out we're pretty well heeled." Didn't seem to care whether it held out or not. Bet yer boots I care. I've been poor as a church mouse too long not to care. What did I do when I seen the assay went \$500 to the ton? Wy, I jist slipped over to ole man Baker's place an' asked the Grouse if she'd like to hitch. I was afraid o' that cuss from Tenderfoot Gulch, that Lonesome Mose. He's struck it, too. What d'ye s'pose she said? "Pay Streak, what does she go to the ton?" "Five hundred, Mollie," sez I, awful anxious, fur I didn't know what Mose's assay showed. An says the Grouse, "I'll think about it, Jim." Called me Jim instead o' Pay Streak. I couldn't stand that, an' cust if I didn't give her a smack 'at sounded like a giant cap bustin'. She didn't git very mad, an' then I knowed it was good as settled. (*Pulls at thread and breaks it.*) Cuss that thread! I reckon that'll hold till Mollie takes charge o' my traps. (*Lawton raps at door, with cane, R.*)

PAY S. Come in, stranger!

LAW. Is this Vance & Rogers' place?

PAY S. It is; step right in; there ain't no call to rap at any miner's door in the Rocky Mountains, but of course you don't know that, bein' a tenderfoot.

LAW. Oh, yes, I know that a miner's door is always open. Are you Rogers?

PAY S. Correct y'are! Squat. (*Wipes off chair with towel.*)

LAW. This is just as good. (*Seats himself on one of logs, PAY S. on the other.*) Are you the man they call Pay Streak?

PAY S. That's my sobriquet (*sobrikwet*), as the editor calls it. The boys called me Pay Streak because I've a way o' askin' how wide the pay streak is when they git to talkin' about their claims. I al'ays look at the pay streak first. A man's the same as a mine; when ye've seen the width of his pay streak, ye've got his measure.

LAW. It's not a bad name, either.

PAY S. Becherlife it aint. Some sense in it. Now if they'd called me Lonesome Mose as they do that in-exo'able cuss over in Tenderfoot Gulch I'd a killed a few of them jist to change my luck.

LAW. I hear you boys have struck it rich.

PAY S. Bigger'n a four-hoss team an' band wagon, stranger.

LAW. Let me see, what is your partner's full name?

PAY S. Vance! Harvey Vance! The boys call him "Old Silence" 'cause he says mighty little an' don't talk no minin' guff about his claims.

LAW. Where does he hail from?

PAY S. Illinois.

LAW. Where is he to-day? I believe I know him.

PAY S. (*Jumping up.*) What! you know my pard, stranger! Now why did ye go beatin' round the bush? That aint a square deal! Why didn't ye jist walk in an' hang up yer hat? Take that there chair! No, but ye must. (*Law takes chair.*) We haint much hyur, but all we got belongs to any friends o' Old Silence. Scuse me, I mean your friend Vance.

LAW. Oh, that's all right, no apologies.

PAY S. Stranger, I'm *cussed* glad to see you. Shake! Wy, we've been hyur two year and never a soul come along that was an *old* friend. I've a whole raft o' kin in Missouri, but none of 'em drifts to this camp. You kin bet yer liver, pard'll be glad to see ye.

LAW. I hope so, it's a good while since I saw him.

PAY S. I'll bet my share in the Little Lucy—an' we was offered \$100,000 last week fur it—that my pardner haint any friends he's ashamed of.

LAW. No, he isn't that kind

PAY S. That's straight! ye can't tell me nothin' about him an' his outfit. Anything he says goes, on this hill. That's 'cause he doesn't say much.

LAW. Where is Mr. Vance to-day?

PAY S. I was jist wonderin' myself, when you dropped in. The gun aint gone so I 'low he is'nt far away.

LAW. Could I have a short talk with him privately?

PAY S. Could you talk with him privately? Stranger, hain't I jist said this place was your'n. When he comes I'll vamoose quick, savvy? I 'low he's out at the Lucy lookin' at the truck. Pard, it's good fur sore eyes to look at that truck, \$500 to the ton.

LAW. I might walk out and meet him, if you don't object.

PAY S. *Object!* Stranger, really ye're not talkin' on the square. How could I *object*. Wy, the mountain's your'n! Everything in sight is your'n!

LAW. Thank you, Pay Streak! By the way, what is your full name?

PAY S. Rogers, Jim Rogers. I'll take ye to the Lucy. No, I reckon you want to see him private. (*Goes to door.*) Well, foller the path straight ahead about two hundred yards.

LAW. Thank you, Mr. Rogers. I'll see you again.

PAY S. Krect. (*Exit LAW R.*) I'll bet he's a financier an' wants to buy the Little Lucy. Well, he can't. She has a pay streak wuth talkin' about, two feet wide an' five hundred to the ton. (*Looks out.*) Great guns, if they aint ladies a comin'! Wonder if they'll stop here fur a drink o' water or anything? I haint been in society sence I left Missouri. I'll be shot if it aint the Grouse an'—an' a strange lady. The Grouse is comin' to take us by s'prise. This place is in a nice ruction fur company. Haint made my bed yet. (*Runs to bed R, turns up the blankets and tries to smooth out the pillow.*) That pillar's harder'n one o' Lonsome Mose's flapjacks. (*Hammers at pillow.*) Ought ter been filled at the saw-mill long ago. An' that towel aint been washed fur a month. (*Flips towel under the bed.*) I'll git one o' Vance's towels. (*Takes clean towel out of cupboard and hangs it across chair back*) Pard's a purty good cook but he aint in it washin' dishes. Them plates looks tough. (*Picks up plates from table, drops knife, picks that up and drops plate, which breaks.*) Damn it! (*Picks up pieces, throws the whole into cupboard with a bang, closes door.*) Look at that skillet, an' fried onions, too,

scentin' the whole mountain. Wher'n thunder kin I put them? I guess that's about the place fur them. (*Tosses skillet out of window.*) There, I s'pose that's the best I kin do on short notice. (*Sits on log and pretends to be reading old soiled paper, rap at door.*) Come in!

ENTER GROUSE and FLO.

GROUSE. Hello, Mr. Rogers!

PAY S. Well, I'll be— (*catches himself*) this is a s'prise, Grouse.

GROUSE. Miss Baker, if you please, Mr. Rogers.

PAY S. (*Surprised.*) Oh—of course! Excuse *me*. No offense I hope, *Miss Baker*.

GROUSE. Mr. Rogers, let me *interduce* Miss Lawton. She's travelin' to see the mountains.

PAY S. (*Bows awkwardly.*) I'm awful glad to see you, Miss Lawton. *You* take the chair. Grouse, I reckon you'll have to squat on a log.

GROUSE. (*Sitting on table.*) Jim Rogers, where's yer manners? Nicknames don't go afore company.

PAY S. No, of course not. (*To FLO.*) I beg pardon, Miss Lawton, but ye see all the miners called her the Rocky Mountain Grouse, long ago when she was a little tot.

GROUSE. (*Making face.*) Long ago! I like that. I s'pose I'm old Methusalem now.

PAY S. (*Embarrassed.*) Now looky hyur, Grouse—I mean Miss Mollie Baker, what ails ye? I didn't mean nothin'. Ye're techy as powder to-day. (*To FLO.*) Excuse *me*, Miss, but I'm a little off on talkin' to ladies. Haint been in society sence I left Joplin, Missouri, five years ago.

FLO. Oh, don't be formal, Mr. Rogers, I like the mountain ways.

PAY S. Wy, to be sure, the mountains is best, lots of room, lots of rocks, lots of—of everything. I say, Miss Lawton, kin I show you Little Lucy? She's a daisy.

FLO. (*Surprised.*) Little Lucy! I don't understand.

GROUSE. Pay Streak, you *are* a greeny. What d'ye

s'pose the lady knows about your lingo. (*To FLO.*) The Little Lucy's a mine.

FLO. (*Laughing.*) I should be delighted to see Lucy but I can not to-day, thank you.

PAY S. Oh well, any day'll do. Besides my pardner, I reckon he could talk to ye. He's a lady's man.

FLO. (*Nervously.*) Oh no! I saw the mines at Leadville. I just wanted to say that there's a man looking for Mr.—for your partner and—

PAY S. Yes, Miss, I told him where to find him.

FLO. (*Trying to appear calm.*) You told him! Miss Baker, they musn't meet.

GROUSE. Now you *have* done it, Jim. They were lookin' fur each other.

PAY S. Holy Moses! How did I know they was lookin' fur each other?

GROUSE. Pay Streak, have you been in the mountains five years an' don't know what a man means when he says he's *lookin'* fur somebody? You don't know enough to pound sand in a rat hole.

PAY S. (*Scratching his head.*) Well, I don't, ladies, an' that's a fact. Why cuss it! (*To FLO.*) Excuse me, Miss, I may haf to actooally swear afore this job's over. But how could I know that that slick chap was *lookin'* fur pard? He only said he wanted to see him.

GROUSE. Well, he mustn't.

FLO. Oh no, Mr. Rogers—I—I can't tell you why, but they must not meet.

PAY S. (*Bowing awkwardly.*) Bet yer life you don't need to tell why. When a lady says she wants a thing that's enough fur me. I aint askin' why. (*Admiring glance at GROUSE.*)

GROUSE. Then don't stand like a dummy. Git a gait on an' stop 'em afore—

PAY S. Wont I, great guns! (*Gets revolver and belt from under pillow.*) I'll stop 'em if I have to take a hand in the game myself.

FLO. (*Alarmed.*) Oh no, Mr. Rogers! Please don't do that!

PAY S. (*Surprised.*) No? Then I wont. I'll jist

argy pardner out of it; I aint much on talk, but I'm used to him.

FLO. An' I'll be so grateful!

PAY S. Don't mention it, Miss. (*Struck with idea.*) I'll convince pardner an' then we'll both convince tother chap if we have to pump him full o' lead to do it.

FLO. Oh, not that, either. You must not do anything.

PAY S. (*Puzzled.*) Well, I'll be—this *is* a puzzler. I give it up.

GROUSE. Why don't you go, Jim? Don't stand there like a mud hen on a log.

PAY S. I'll vamoose instanter, savvy? (*Exits hastily R.*)

FLO. Miss Baker, you'll think this very strange.

GROUSE. Not a bit, Miss. I've been there.

FLO. (*Surprised.*) But I mean—

GROUSE. Never mind. Jim'll straighten it all out. And if you don't want to meet Mr. Vance, you'd better skip right off, fur he's liable to turn up any minnit. There haint been no shootin' yet or we'd heard it.

FLO. Oh, I'm so glad. I'll go now and you wait to bring me word.

GROUSE. But you may meet tother one on the mountain.

FLO. I want to meet him. One word would fix it all right. (*Exit.*)

GROUSE. Well, I never! These fine ladies play a big game. Keeps both on the hooks till they git fightin' mad an' then goes tearin' round tryin' to make peace. Humph! Wants to meet tother one. Well, I s'pose *he's* the one an' Vance gits left. I'm awful sorry for Vance fur he's *white* an' Jim likes him awful well. (*Sits on table and swings feet.*) That comes o' havin' too many fellers at onct. I've been there, but I reckon I shipped Lonesome Mose jist in time. Good Lord, only think o' Pay Streak an' Lonesome Mose cavortin' round the mountains lookin' for each other. Why, it makes Jim hot fur me even to mention Mose. There's a good deal worse than Mose, but I wouldn't look at him

beside Jim. I've been dreamin' o' Jim ever since we led the ball at Cottonwood Pass two years ago last winter. If anything 'ud happen Jim—well, the Rocky Mountain Grouse would'nt fly so high, that's all. But it wouldn't do for me to tell him all that. A little at a time kind o' keeps a man lookin' for more an' then Jim's sort o' gone on himself an' it would make him sassy. (*Looks out.*) Why, there he comes runnin'

ENTER PAY S., *R.*

PAY S. (*Breathlessly.*) Run all the way an' back. Can't find 'em nowhere. Where's she?

GROUSE. Gone. She's a sly one.

PAY S. There yer off yer lead. She'll run away up on assay.

GROUSE. I didn't mean that. She's playin' two suckers at onct, I guess.

PAY S. I don't b'lieve it. That woman's no coquette (*cokwet*).

GROUSE. Why, she said so herself.

PAY S. No!

GROUSE. Fact! But she's had a lesson. She's run to the end of the tether an' she knows which 'un she'll take.

PAY S. Then it's my pard, sure.

GROUSE. Taint nether.

PAY S. Why, tother one is old enough to be her pap.

GROUSE. Don't care if he is. Them city gals don't care fur age. They jist look at the rocks.

PAY S. Well, pardner'll have plenty of stuff when we git the Lucy goin' two shifts a day. Say, Grouse, why didn't ye mention that to her an' say a good word fur pardner?

GROUSE. Mention that! To her! Land o' twilight! It's a heap you know about women.

PAY S. (*Puts arm round her waist.*) I know they are sweeter than all creation.

GROUSE. (*Withdrawing.*) Oh, you do, do you?

PAY S. (*Shoving closer to her on table.*) I mean there's one that is ole peaches an' honey. (*Tries to kiss her.*)

GROUSE. (*Slaps him, but not very defiantly.*) Pay Streak, I al'ays thought you'd some sense.

PAY S. Bet yer boots *I* know a good thing. Say, I'm awful sorry for pard. I cotton to that gal.

GROUSE. Indeed! Then I'd better clear the way.

PAY S. (*Hastily.*) I mean fur him. I believe she's actooally good enough fur him.

GROUSE. It's no use. He is off the lead. Tother chap's campin' on the claim. All ye kin do now is keep him away from tother one.

PAY S. How'll I do it? Where the deuce is pardner, anyway? He went out after breakfast an' never said anything about goin' away.

GROUSE. We'll fix up a scheme. I'm sort o' sorry for her. She's awful anxious.

PAY S. (*Enthusiastically.*) Yes, I'd do anything fur her.

GROUSE. (*Looks meaningly.*) Oh, indeed!

PAY S. I mean fur your sake, Mollie. Say, it's awful nice to call you Mollie, savvy?

GROUSE. Jim, ye're silly. Why don't you try to think.

PAY S. I jist can't when you are hyur. You think.

GROUSE. Well, where do you guess Vance is?

PAY S. You didn't meet him goin' to town, so he must 'a gone over the mountain to look at the Jumbo.

GROUSE. Then I'll tell ye what to do. You take the gun an' meet him an' say that the jumpers are after pap's claim again over in the basin.

PAY S. He'll want me to go 'long then.

GROUSE. Tell him you are goin' back to camp fur more men.

PAY S. I'll be cust! The very thing. (*Gets gun.*)

GROUSE. An' do hurry. I'll wait till you come back. I'm gittin' skeered.

PAY S. Don't you worry. Jist let any body sass you an' I'll—

GROUSE. Do go on, quick! (*Pushes him out.*) It's downright silly the way men act about women, wantin' to shoot and sayin' they'll die. Humph! An' a wo-

man, she can't do nothin' but git scart an' cry an' carry on. I do hope he'll git Vance away. It serves her right, though, to git a good scare; she'll know how it is herself. (*Knocking at door, GROUSE starts.*) Come in!

HERBERT *at door.*

HERB. Whose cabin is this?

GROUSE. It's Rogers & Vance's, owners of the Little Lucy.

HERB. Is Mr. Vance around?

GROUSE. He ain't fur away, I guess. Will Rogers do? He's jist gone. I kin call him back, but he's in a powerful hurry.

HERB. Don't call him, I'll drop in again. Could you give me a drink of water?

GROUSE. Certingly, come in! (*HERB. steps inside, she gets dipperful of water from pail, he drinks.*)

HERB. Thank you, very much.

GROUSE. Don't mention it. (*Looks at him.*) You're a tenderfoot, I guess!

HERB. (*Smiles.*) Yes, that is, I have been in Colorado only six months. They told me of this Vance over at Dead Man's Gulch. (*Rests foot on log.*)

GROUSE. Did you want to see him pertickler?

HERB. Rather particular, yes.

GROUSE. If it's business, Rogers knows.

HERB. It's a private matter. Perhaps he is at the Lucy?

GROUSE. He's most likely at the Jumbo. Take the trail straight up an' it's jist over the ridge.

HERB. Thank you, I'll meet him perhaps. Good day. (*Exit H., R.*)

GROUSE. Pr'aps ye wont. I wonder who'll be wantin' Vance next? He's peaceable, I guess. Wants to buy the mine mebbe. If he had been an old man—(*Pause.*) Great Jerusalem! I'll bet we're clean off the lead, digging away in country rock. S'pose that is the feller 'at's lookin' fur Vance. *That* gal wouldn't leave no young feller like Vance fur an old man. An' I've *told!* Well, I'm a bigger fool than I said Jim was. (*Runs*

around.) *I'm* excited now! This is a case, sure! Minds me of the time Slim Jim shot Club Foot Pete fur cheat-in' at kyards, when pap kep' the tavern at Cottonwood Pass. Pap was jist reachin' fur his gun when Pete kind o' staggered an' threw up his hands like that, and says he: "Baker, I'm done fur—I pass." Them was his last words.

ENTER PAY S., *excitedly*, *R.*

PAY S. I can't find nobody nowhere!

GROUSE. Pay Streak, you're a fool!

PAY S. (*Nettled.*) S'pose I am, what's the use o' tellin' me every five minutes.

GROUSE. Cause you are, you can't see an inch from yer nose. Wat did ye say he was an *old* man, fur?

PAY S. Cause he was!

GROUSE. He aint ether, an' we might a knowed it. He's been hyur, an' he's a young feller.

PAY S. A young feller lookin' fur my pardner?

GROUSE. Yes, lookin fur' him pertikler.

PAY S. When it comes to that, if there's any fly young feller 'round this hill lookin' fur somebody, he'll find a man sure. Mebbe he'll find *me* afore he quits. If he wants a scrap, he needn't wear out shoe leather lookin' fur it in Ruby Camp.

GROUSE. (*Seriously.*) Pay Streak, don't you take up nobody else's rows till ye haf to. You'll find enough o' yer own in this world. I've seen more o' these mountains than you have. Pap kep' tavern fur years at the Pass, an' I've seen shootin' scrapes enough. I seen Club Foot Pete killed, an' it's an awful sight when it's right afore yer eyes.

PAY S. I ain't a lookin' fur anybody.

GROUSE. But what'll we do?

PAY S. I don't know.

GROUSE. We've got to do somethin'.

PAY S. Well, Mollie, wat's your idee?

GROUSE. Go down to camp right away, an' tell pap an' git some o' the miners out. Pretend it's jumpers over in the Basin.

PAY S. Will you go 'long to camp?

GROUSE. No, I'll wait hyur for Vance. If he comes I'll send him to the Basin.

PAY S. (*Going.*) I'll round 'em up.

GROUSE. An' give that strange feller a tip that it 'ud be healthier fur him to take the next stage back to Dead Man's Gulch.

PAY S. Stage! Humph! walkin's good that direction. (*Exit hurriedly R.*)

GROUSE. Men's all fools, I guess. Fightin' about claims an' women as if there wasn't plenty o' both to go round. Women's bigger fools to egg 'em on. I needn't brag, ether. S'pose I'd drawed on Lonesome Mose a little further, there'd been music in camp.

ENTER VANCE, R.

VANCE. Hello, Grouse, you here!

GROUSE. I guess so, ye see me, don't ye?

VANCE. I have that pleasure. (*She courtsies.*) You are waiting to see Jim of course. Where is that boy, anyway?

GROUSE. (*With toss of head.*) Waitin' fur Jim. I guess not. When I wait fur a man I wait at home.

VANCE. Of course, Miss Baker, no offense.

GROUSE. Where in creation have *you* been all mornin'?

VANCE. I felt out of sorts and I went over to the mineral spring to take a good drink of that water.

GROUSE. I'll bet you are the first man in Ruby Camp that ever walked two miles fur a drink o' water.

VANCE. I like to watch the silver bubbles boiling up from the clear depths.

GROUSE. Well, *I* don't go much on them silver bubbles. The silver in em's too thin. Did ye meet anybody?

VANCE. (*Laughs.*) Yes, Lonesome Mose going to his claim. He looks loner than ever, lately. (*Meaning look at her.*)

GROUSE. Humph! Lonesome Mose! I mean, didn't ye meet nobody at all?

VANCE. Nobody else. (*At stove.*) Any one lookin' for me? Where's our skillet? I want to get dinner.

GROUSE. (*Impatiently.*) I don't know nothin' about yer ole skillet. Say, Mr. Vance, did you know any young ladies in Illinois?

VANCE. (*Surprised.*) Why, to be sure, plenty of them. (*Looking.*) What on earth has become of that skillet? I'm as hungry as a wolf.

GROUSE. That's like a man, he'd haf to eat if he died next minnit.

VANCE. He'd die if he didn't.

GROUSE. Dyin' with yer boots on aint so funny.

VANCE. (*Surprised.*) Why, what do you mean, Miss Baker. You seem excited.

GROUSE. (*Laughs.*) I aint the kind to git excited bad. (*He looks inquiringly.*) An' ye don't know any *pertickler* young lady?

VANCE. (*With serious tone.*) Mollie, every man in his time has known some *particular* young lady. Sometimes she is too particular and sometimes not particular enough.

GROUSE. I guess this un's jist about right.

VANCE. (*Starting.*) What do you mean, Mollie? Any lady in camp that knows me?

GROUSE. (*Laughing.*) It 'pears so. She's been hyur.

VANCE. Here! Did she want to see me?

GROUSE. No, she *didn't* want to see you.

VANCE. Then why the deuce did she come here! There's some mistake. (*Turns to look for skillet.*) I wish Jim would let the cooking outfit alone.

GROUSE. Never mind yer ole skillet. I thought mebbe you'd meet her on the road.

VANCE. (*At cupboard.*) Jim is very careless. He has been chucking things round again.

GROUSE. You're a nice man to prefer a skillet to a young lady.

VANCE. (*Surprised.*) Excuse me, Grouse, I thought we were good enough friends to be informal. I'll not look for the skillet any more.

GROUSE. I'm talkin' about her. She was a bute.

VANCE. Since she did *not* want to see me I hardly think I am interested in her beauty.

GROUSE. It's too funny that you didn't meet anybody. They're lookin' fur you all over the mountain to go to the Basin. Jim said ye must go right off. The Leadville outfit is tryin' to jump pap's claim agin.

VANCE. I don't believe that. It must be a false report.

GROUSE. But it aint! Git yer gun and take the trail. Ye kin git dinner at Jack's cabin.

VANCE. Why Mollie, Lonesome Mose was in the Basin yesterday and he says the Leadville gang have all gone.

GROUSE. (*With petulance.*) Lonesome Mose, indeed! As if pap didn't know better about his own claim. Would you put Mose Randall's word up agin' pap's er a lady's?

VANCE. Well, Mollie, I didn't mean to contradict you. I'll enquire as soon as I get a bite to eat.

GROUSE. An' yer goin' to wait to eat?

VANCE. Yes, I'll take a snack.

GROUSE. Some men 'ud eat if an earthquake was comin'.

VANCE. I can easily catch them before they get to Jack's cabin.

GROUSE. An' ye wont go now? Oh do, please, Mr. Vance.

VANCE. I don't see the necessity of starving.

GROUSE. I do.

VANCE. Ever try it?

GROUSE. Please don't wait, Mr. Vance.

VANCE. It won't take fifteen minutes.

GROUSE. Well, they's no use tryin' to do anything with a man—or a mule. I've got to do something. (*Starts hastily.*)

VANCE. What's the rush? Hold on, Miss Baker.

GROUSE. I wont! (*Exit R.*)

VANCE. What on earth ails the Grouse. She always was a kitten and I'm afraid she has a temper. Jim'll

have to hold a pretty steady rein. (*Looking round for skillet.*) I guess that skillet has taken wings. There's Jim's dirty towel under the bed and my clean one on the chair back. There has been some one here I guess. I wonder if any sneak thief has paid us a visit? (*Looks at JIM's pillow.*) His revolver is gone. (*Looks at his own cot.*) Mine is all right. (*Puts his pistol on table.*)

HERBERT *knocks at door.*

VANCE. Hello stranger! Come in!

HERB. Is this Mr. Vance's place?

VANCE. My name is Vance.

HERB. (*Advances. With meaning.*) I've been looking for you.

VANCE. (*Surprised.*) Indeed! You have found me, it seems. Your business, if I may enquire?

HERB. I guess you know my business. A lady's honor.

VANCE. (*Starting.*) A lady's honor! (*Recognizes him.*) And *you* seek me? So much the better.

HERB. I come from her to demand an explanation for your language and conduct.

VANCE. (*Slowly as if with effort.*) You come to me, and from her? Why, you infamous scoundrel—

HERB. Hold! Don't waste words, Mr. Vance. What you say of me can be settled some other time. On her behalf—

VANCE. And you insult me with the mention of that heartless, base woman.

HERB. (*With deep, quiet indignation.*) Stop or I'll kill you on the spot. (*Draws pistol.*) Only blood can wipe out that insult.

VANCE. You are right. I have waited long for this meeting.

HERB. Are you armed?

VANCE. (*Taking up pistol.*) As good a 38 as ever came to the camp. We'll go up into the pine woods.

HERB. Why not here in front of your cabin.

VANCE. We may be interrupted.

HERB. Exactly! I am already suspected and warned to leave camp instantly.

VANCE. Then we must use dispatch. (*Looks out.*) There are people coming now, down yonder. Here will do as well.

HERB. As you please, I am ready.

VANCE. (*Closes door, fastens it with latch.*) Take your place at the door. (*V. goes to opposite wall.*) I'll stand here. I'll count *one, two, three.*

HERB. Is that fair?

VANCE. Then you count.

HERB. I want no advantage. Toss for count.

VANCE. All right! (*Produces coin.*) Head or tail?

HERB. Head!

VANCE. (*Tossing coin on table.*) Head! (*tosses*) tail! (*tosses*) head! You win. (*They take position.*) I'll pull exactly at three. (*At word three, a scream is heard outside. VANCE fires but HERBERT is disconcerted and, staggering, fires wild shot. PAY S. bursts door open. FLO. and GROUSE in door.*)

PAY S. Stop that, instantly!

VANCE. It is done! (*HERB. grasping side staggers.*)

PAY S. My God, he is dying. (*Seizes HERB.'s arm and leads him to bed, R.*)

FLO. (*Clings to him at other side.*) Herbert! my poor brother! Speak! Herbert! (*Throws herself on cot, seizing his hands.*)

VANCE. (*Who has stood like a statue, drops pistol mechanically, like a man stricken.*) Her brother! Oh God, too late!

TABLEAU.

HERB. *on cot*; FLO. *bending over him*; VANCE *L. with right hand on table, head drooping*; ROGERS *back of table regarding him*; GROUSE *R. C. regarding VANCE.*

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE—*Reception room of tourist hotel, Florida; folding doors in flat C.; piano by wall, R; settee by wall, L., table C. littered with old periodicals, and some oranges in basket; R. R., and steamship advts. on the walls; chairs ad lib; big ox horns, stuffed bird, alligator, or other familiar hotel trapping. If not convenient to have door in flat, entrance may be at either side, by re-arrangement of furniture. Doors always open. FLORENCE and RACHEL discovered as curtain rises.*

FLO. Rachel, how do you like your first experience down South?

RACHEL. It is all so odd.

FLO. Are you enjoying it?

RACH. Oh, so much. I always wanted to travel. I never hoped to get such a trip as this. The trees and everything are so different.

FLO. It is much stranger still in Mexico; if you could only have seen that.

RACH. I'll never forget your kindness in giving me this trip.

FLO. Thank papa, Rachel, I was selfish and didn't want any maid. It looks foolish for a girl like me to have a maid.

RACH. It's no harm. Mr. Lawton wants you to get strong again.

FLO. (*Rather sadly.*) Rachel, don't you think I am strong?

RACH. Oh, yes! You look much better lately.

ENTER MR. LAW., *D. F.*

LAW. I've been looking for you, daughter. What is your programme for to-day? A drive or a sail?

FLO. I don't care which, papa, I enjoy everything that pleases you.

LAW. But I want you to choose for yourself. I am such an old traveler I have seen about everything.

FLO. What do you say, Rachel?

RACH. Laws! Miss Flossie, it ain't for me to choose.

FLO. But what do you like? Are you afraid of the water?

RACH. I don't know. Do they get sea sick?

LAW. Not on the river. Florence, they are catching chameleons now in the garden.

FLO. Oh, I want to see them! (*Exit D. F.*)

RACH. So do I! (*Going D. F.*)

LAW. Rachel!

RACH. Sir!

LAW. Come here, I want to speak to you. I have made an important discovery.

RACH. Land sakes! none of the trunks missing?

LAW. (*Laughs.*) The trunks are all right. I've found somebody here that Florence knows!

RACH. Who?

LAW. That Colorado partner of—of you know whom.

RACH. Dear me! how'd he get so far?

LAW. He is here on his wedding trip. In this hotel. Do you think Flossie would like to meet them?

RACH. I don't know. It might worry her and—

LAW. Recall the old times! Just what I thought. But then, she might be glad to see them. They were very kind to her. Rough people, but good as gold. He is putting on style. Best rooms in the house!

RACH. Hadn't we better keep clear of them for a day or two and sort of prepare her for it?

LAW. But how can you in a hotel like this? Everybody sees everybody else. If we weren't fatigued already, I'd go on to Lake Worth to-day.

RACH. Then the best way is to ask her right out, whether she cares to see them.

LAW. I know her answer. She'll think it a duty.

RACH. The sooner the better then, I think.

LAW. Very well, I'll go and talk to her. (*Exit D. F.*)

RACH. Well aint that odder'n Dick's hatband! The idee of meeting people from the four quarters of the globe. These tourists seem to keep on forever running to and fro on the earth. How can they afford it? Money goes like water! I never dreamed o' such expense! (*Sees oranges on table.*) And an orange here

aint nothin' more than a potato was where I was raised. I'm going to take one! (*Takes orange.*)

ENTER HERB., *suddenly, D. F.*; RACHEL, *surprised, looks guilty and starts out quickly, D. F.*)

HERB. (*Excitedly.*) Rachel!

RACH. Mr. Herbert—what is it?

HERB. Where's Flossie? (*Lowering voice.*)

RACH. In the garden.

HERB. I must find her at once! It is very important.

RACH. Yes, I know.

HERB. You know! Have you seen *him*?

RACH. Him? Who?

HERB. Why Vance, of course!

RACH. (*Startled.*) Mercy me! Mr. Herbert, is he here?

HERB. Yes, and may meet her any minute!

RACH. (*Excitedly.*) That might give her a relapse. She's awfully nervous yet.

HERB. I know it. What can we do?

RACH. We must get her away at once!

HERB. I have a different idea.

RACH. What is that?

HERB. I'll make him explain his conduct or—

RACH. Oh Herbie, please don't think of that! Remember what happened before! Those miners are dreadful men! He'll kill you, sure!

HERB. He'll not get a chance! I'll get the drop and he can apologize or do worse. I'll find him at once.

RACH. Oh Herbert, don't. (*Grasps his arm.*)

HERB. Let me go. I'll not endure such an insult to my sister. As long as he took me for some one else he had an excuse, but now that he knows I am her brother, his conduct is infamous. (*Going D. F.*)

RACH. (*Trying to restrain him.*) But your father—speak to him first.

HERB. Father would call him to account if they met.

RACH. But he would not hurt your father. They never quarreled.

HERB. He shall answer for his conduct.

RACH. Oh, think of her—she loves him yet.

HERB. I am thinking of her. The traitor! (*Goes hurriedly D. F. pushing RACHEL aside.*)

RACH. (*Excitedly.*) What shall I do? Oh, where is Mr. Lawton? Another such shock will kill her. I must find Mr. Lawton immediately. (*Exit RACH. rapidly as*

ENTER ROGERS and WIFE, L., runs against R., and drops orange.

ROG. Beg pardon, madam! (*She never stops.*) Cuss it, that gal's crazy.

MRS. R. Jim, you must quit swearin'.

ROG. I'm tryin' my level best. Cuss it isn't swearin' at all. Say, Mollie, aint this great?

MRS. R. What's great?

ROG. Why, this country an' everything. Oranges right on the trees till they're yaller as gold, an' strawberries in February. (*Picks orange from floor.*)

MRS. R. I haint seen any strawberries, Jim. They're not on the table.

ROG. Well no, of course not. They go north to sell. Ye couldn't expect to see 'em on the table.

MRS. R. Why not? What's the use of havin' money if it won't buy things as soon as other people gets 'em an' as good?

ROG. I reckon that's right, but ye see these Floridy people figger both ways. The hotel makes ye pay fur the berries jist the same as if ye got 'em an' then sells 'em fur market. Savvy?

MRS. R. I'm sick an' tired o' bacon an' canned stuff. Had 'em all my life in the Rocky Mountains.

ROG. But Mollie, jist think o' the other curus things, the palmettos an' the alligators—

MRS. R. We can't eat the alligators.

ROG. But we kin take one home in a cigyar box.

MRS. R. Indeed we wont. It makes me tired to see people trottin' round with a lot o' hand bags and Florida canes.

ROG. Made in New York—

MRS. An' alligators in boxes, smellin' like fury. Women doin' it, too! An' fussin over chameleons an' carryin' green cocoanuts home. As if sich things were of any account out o' their right place.

ROG. There's another thing, Mollie, 'at makes me still tireder.

MRS. R. What's that?

ROG. Eatin' fish. We've had 'em three times a day ever sence we've been in Floridy. I reckon we'll haf to eat all the fish in Injun river, an' there's a slew of 'em. Wy, a man told me this mornin' 'at sometimes they was so thick in the river that ye couldn't row a boat. Oars jist slipped over solid fish as if the river was greased.

MRS. R. Jim, that man took you fur a tenderfoot.

ROG. Mebbe so. As I don't know much about Floridy I couldn't dispute him, but I up an' told him about that time the mountain lions were so plenty in the Gunnison country 'at we had to kick 'em away from round the fire afore we could git breakfast, an' we couldn't tell when it thundered fur their infernal roarin'. I put that at him as a sort of a feeler.

MRS. R. Jim, I'm sick o' the whole business.

ROG. (*With feeling.*) Say now, Mollie, ye don't mean it. On yer weddin' trip an' tired of it? (*Caressing her.*) Mollie, ye don't mean *me* too, do you?

MRS. R. (*Smiling.*) No, Jim, I don't mean you, but I'm tired bein' stared at an' pointed out.

ROG. Wy Mollie, d'ye s'pose they're onto our racket?

MRS. R. Jim, your slang is dreadful. Can't you drop a little of it. Of course everybody can see that we are bride and groom.

ROG. How on earth can they tell?

MRS. R. Humph! An' you that spoony—

ROG. Then it's me that makes ye tired, an' my ways. (*Sadly.*) Mollie, you don't know what you have said. Ye're ashamed o' me.

MRS. R. No, I am not, Jim. I am not ashamed of

anything, but I am disgusted. People talk nice to our faces and laugh at us behind our backs.

ROG. Why, cuss 'em. I could buy the whole caboodle of 'em.

MRS. R. No, ye couldn't, Jim. These people have money, and what's more, they are used to it, and get the worth of their money travelin'. We don't.

ROG. Worth o' their money! How does that old skate git the worth o' his money who goes trottin' round with what he calls a *vally de shamber* to put his clothes on? Mollie, I never want nobody puttin' my clothes on me. Why, it aint decent. When I git as wuthless as that cuss, I want 'em to take me out an' lynch me.

MRS. R. But when that man orders anything, the waiters get it at once.

ROG. So they do fur us. I plunk down a dollar an' they git a gait on.

MRS. R. An' they laugh at ye afterwards.

ROG. (*Angry.*) Laugh at me! How d'ye know?

MRS. R. I've overheard them.

ROG. Well, there'll be a dead nigger if they do it agin.

MRS. R. Jim, you mustn't talk that way. We can't blame 'em. We don't know how to act, I guess.

ROG. No, Mollie, I reckon we aint in it.

MRS. R. Let's go back home!

ROG. All right. Vance is tired of it, too.

MRS. R. Vance tired? Why, he knows how to act. He's been with the best.

ROG. He's sick of it. Goin' to Europe or some'ers.

MRS. R. Poor Vance! I'm awful sorry. D'ye s'pose he'll ever git over that shootin' of *her* brother.

ROG. No! Say, Mollie (*confidentially*), I s'pose I oughtn't to tell. He asked me not to, but that's why he's goin' so sudden. He's so restless, he can't stay in one place.

MRS. R. I'm awful sorry fur Vance.

ROG. You bet. If I was him I'd get onto that lead agin or burn some powder. I never seen whiter people than them Lawtons.

MRS. R. But how could they make up after that?

ROG. Old man is Ar.

MRS. R. He doesn't want to marry the old man!

ROG. No, but I'd have an assay anyway an' see if there wasn't a trace. If the button wasn't bigger'n a pin-head I'd foller the lead. As fur the young lady, she's all pay streak clean through, an' a thousand dollars to the ton, an' purty as a peach. If I wasn't taken a'ready, Mollie—

MRS. R. Now Jim, don't be silly. You do say such things an' people hear.

ROG. Let 'em hear! who cares?

MRS. R. I s'pose he's never seen her sence.

ROG. Seein' her would be awful hard to do after shootin' her brother before her eyes!

MRS. R. But it was all a terrible mistake, nobody was to blame.

ROG. D'ye think they could ever forgit that?

MRS. R. Mebbe not, but I b'lieve both of 'em would be better fur havin' a talk. Vance is too good an' true to go dodgin' anybody.

ROG. That's what!

MRS. R. I wish they could meet. She loves him to death.

ROG. D'ye think so, Mollie?

MRS. R. I know it. Why she nearly went out of her head after the shootin'.

ROG. Why couldn't I tell him that?

MRS. R. (*Emphatically.*) Don't think of such a thing.

ROG. Hist, Mollie! (*He hears VANCE coming.*)

ENTER VANCE, *D. F.*

VANCE. Good morning, Mrs. Rogers!

MRS. R. Good morning, Mr. Vance! I am so glad to see you. I am so weary of seein' nobody but strangers an' niggers day after day.

VANCE. I'm very sorry then that I have come to announce my immediate departure.

MRS. R. So ye're goin' to leave us?

VANCE. (*Sadly.*) Yes, I'm sorry, but I—I have changed my plans.

MRS. R. Purty sudden, aint it?

VANCE. Rather! Well, you see, Mrs. Rogers, I'm a nervous, restless sort of chap. Always was, you know.

ROG. Pard, come back to the mountains with us.

VANCE. (*Surprised.*) What! Are you going, too?

ROG. Yes, Mollie's gittin' tired of society.

VANCE. I don't blame her. Such a hurly-burly, come-and-go sort of life as this is intolerable.

MRS. R. I can't bear it.

ROG. The Grouse is all tore up about it. Says people make fun of us. I said let me ketch 'em at it.

MRS. R. (*Warningly.*) Jim!

ROG. What do I care fur 'em? I pay as I go.

VANCE. Yes, of course.

MRS. R. Pay as you go! Just as if money did everything. They have money an' edication, we have nothin' but money.

ROG. (*Vexed.*) Don't say that, Mrs. Rogers. Taint so. We have somethin' else. We've horse sense. That's more'n that old galoot with the *vally de shamber* kin say. An' look at that arm. Aint that something? I've driv a drill three foot into solid granite in the Lucy, an' I kin do it agin. An' that old gilly an' his *vally de shamber* couldn't both do that in a week, to save their necks.

MRS. R. They don't have to drill holes in rocks.

ROG. Well, I'll drill a hole in the next feller 'at laughs at you, Mollie. An' I'll make it big enough fur him to put in a skylight. Cuss 'em, what do I care for Floridy, an' dudes from down East, an' gals dressed to kill. None of 'em as purty as you!

MRS. R. Jim Rogers!

ROG. An' if some o' them dudes aint a holy show, I'll eat a live alligator.

VANCE. I think you are oversensitive, Mrs. Rogers. You'll get used to this after a while and like it better.

MRS. R. Harvey Vance, why don't you like it then? It's your own kind.

VANCE. (*Uneasy.*) Well—in fact I never was much for show and style, and—in fact it occurred to me to see Europe while I have a chance. (*Going.*)

ROG. Goin' to pack up?

VANCE. Yes. I want to catch the next Savannah boat. (*Exit.*)

ROG. Say Mollie, le's us pack our traps an' the whole outfit'll go to Europe.

MRS. R. Good land! Jim Rogers, are you crazy? (*Servant raps at door.*)

ROG. Come in.

ENTER *servant with card on tray.*

ROG. (*Takes card.*) Somebody callin' on us, Mollie. Waltz 'em in. (*Servant grins.*) Say, looky hyur, are you grinnin' at me, you cussed Ethiopian monkey? * I'll break yer neck! (*Grabs at waiter who drops tray and flies out as ROG. throws tray after him.* MRS. R. *fit of laughter*) Cyards everywhere! Instead o' comin' right in. I can't stand this foolery nether.

ENTER MR. LAW and FLO.

LAW. Mr. Rogers, I believe.

ROG. That's me! Why, how are you, Mr. Lawton. Awful glad to see you. (*Introducing.*) My wife! Used to be the Grouse, you know.

LAW. Mrs. Rogers, I'm delighted. You remember my daughter.

MRS. R. Yes, indeed!

FLO. Oh, very well. (*They kiss.*) My dear friends, married! Many congratulations.

ROG. Yes, Mollie 'an me thought we'd hitch.

MRS. R. James!

ROG. Get married I mean, 'an now we're on our weddin' tower.

LAW. Let me also extend my heartiest congratulations. (*To MRS. R.*) Of course you are enjoying your trip. We should never ask a bride that question.

*If waiter is white, substitute: "You cussed dried-herrin', Floridy cracker."

MRS. R. Why yes—that is—

ROG. She's kickin' a little. Haint got used to tippin' everybody every time she turns round. I ain't carin' fur expense.

MRS. R. James, that's not interestin' to other folks. (JIM looks at her then at MR. L.)

FLO. I'm *so* glad to see you, Mrs. Rogers, you look so well—

ROG. Lookin' well! I should say. Mollie, I call that neat. (*Women aside.*)

LAW. (*Laughing.*) Rogers, (*in half aside*) you're in great luck.

ROG. You bet! I'm right on the pay streak. Han'-some bird and stuff to buy the feathers.

LAW. We owe you and your wife a great deal.

ROG. Not a red! Wy, cuss it, I owe you somethin' I can't never pay. To think I let them fight—it makes me sick to think of it. Am I doin' right to mention it?

LAW. What's done is done.

ENTER RACHEL, *D. F.*, running, out of breath.

RACH. (*Excitedly.*) Oh Mr. Lawton!

LAW. What is the matter, Rachel?

FLO. Rachel, speak!

RACH. I'm so out of breath (*gasps*), he's lookin' for him.

ROG. (*Excitedly.*) Who's lookin' for who?

FLO. Rachel, you make me nervous.

LAW. Speak Rachel! What ails you?

RACH. I've run everywhere lookin' for you. Mr. Herbert is lookin' for Vance.

ROG. Herbert! Wy, he's dead!

LAW. }
FLO. } Dead!

ROG. Yes, the jewel (*duel*) they fit in the mountains. Is that gal crazy?

LAW. My son is not dead, he got well.

ROG. Not dead! Got well! The cussed paper said he was dead.

LAW. A reporter's mistake.

ROG. We'll, I'll be—that beats *me*.

FLO. (*Soliloquy.*) That is why *he* never came. (*With anguish.*) Oh! oh! (MRS. R. *helps her to settee.*)

LAW. Rachel, where are they?

RACH. I don't know, sir. But Mr. Herbert has a pistol. Oh, they'll shoot.

FLO. That is terrible! Do stop them please! Quick!

ROG. Lookin' fur 'im with a gun. Cuss *me* if that don't mind me of old times. I'll take a hand I 'low. (*Changes.*) Say, I haint no gun. (*Excitedly.*) Mollie, I told you we'd need a gun.

LAW. Run, you are young. Explain. Command peace.

ROG. Now, how *kin* a man command peace with no gun. Why, he wouldn't have no more say than a baby.

MRS. R. Jim, do go. Speak to them.

ROG. Bet yer life I'll try! (*Runs out D. F.*)

LAW. (*Anxiously.*) Daughter, have courage. It'll be all right. What a mistake.

FLO. But I can't see him. Take me to my room, papa.

LAW. Yes dear. (*They start, she leaning on his arm.*)

ENTER ROG., *hurriedly, D. F.*

ROG. It's *all* right. No shootin'. Here they are.

ENTER VANCE and HERB., *D. F.*

HERB. Yes, it is all right. Father, welcome Mr. Vance, *my friend*. (*L. and V. shake hands cordially.*)

ROG. Mollie, I'm so awful glad, I want to raise ole Nick!

MRS. R. Jim, be still.

ROG. Well, it's all right, pard. (*Seizes V.'s hand.*)

VANCE. No, it is *not* all right yet. It is for the one most wronged to say that. (*To FLO.*) Miss Lawton—

FLO. Harvey!

VANCE. Can you forgive me? (*Looks at her. Pause.*) Yes?

FLO. Yes. (*She extends her hand greatly overcome. They meet aside L., others gather R.*)

ROG. (*To MOLLIE.*) I told you. Say, Mr. Lawton, this is a great country after all. It's good enough for me.

HERB. There's luck in it, too.

LAW. It is not bad I think.

ROG. (*Turns toward V. and F.*) Pard, goin' to Europe now?

MRS. R. (*Pulls at his arm.*) Let 'em alone!

VANCE. Why yes; with Mr. Lawton's permission.

LAW. Vance, I leave all those things to the parties interested.

VANCE. What do you say, Flossie?

FLO. Harvey—we—we'll think it over.

ROG. That's jist the way the Grouse talked when I asked her. It's a go! Mollie, git to packin' the trunks. We'll be in the party. (*Dress stage. Looks at watch, suddenly changes, looks at watch.*) Holy Moses! Mollie, we're to go a fishin' to-day an' the boat's been waiting two hours at two dollars an hour.

TABLEAU.

R.

L.

HERB., LAWTON, MRS. R., ROG., VANCE, FLO., RACH.

SLOW CURTAIN.

THE COBBLER

A MONOLOGUE OF HUMOR AND PATHOS

BY T. S. DENISON

Author of

Odds with the Enemy, Initiating a Granger, Wanted, a Correspondent, A Family Strike, Seth Greenback, Louva, the Pauper, Hans Von Smash, Borrowing Trouble, Two Ghosts in White, The Pull-Back, Country Justice, The Assessor, The Sparkling Cup, Our Country, Irish Linen Peddler, The School Ma'am, Kansas Immigrants, An Only Daughter, Too Much of a Good Thing, Under the Laurels, Hard Cider, The Danger Signal, Wide Enough for Two, Pets of Society, Is the Editor In? The New Woman, Patsy O'Wang, Rejected, Only Cold Tea, Madam P's Beauty Parlors, Topp's Twins, A First-Class Hotel, It's all in the Pay-Streak, The Cobbler, A Dude in a Cyclone, Friday Dialogues.

Also the Novels,

The Man Behind, An Iron Crown, etc.

CHICAGO:

T. S. DENISON, PUBLISHER,

163 RANDOLPH STREET.

THE COBBLER.

CHARACTER.

THE COBBLER, who while examining old shoes in his shop, discourses about their various owners.

COSTUME.

The Cobbler should make up as old man, poorly dressed, gray wig, spectacles.

COPYRIGHT, 1895, BY T. S. DENISON.

THE COBBLER.

SCENE—*A cobbler's shop. Shoemaker's bench and kit, shelves, empty dry goods box, two paper shoe boxes, roll of leather leaning in corner, lasts hanging on wall, old shoes scattered about and scraps of leather on floor, old chair with one leg broken. Bench well down C. so cobbler can move round freely in shop. Cobbler with apron and make-up to suit.*

COBBLER. (*As curtain rises is hammering a piece of sole leather on his lap stone.*) That sole's got to be jist right, jist so thick an' no thicker. It's fur Lawyer Boyd and I 'low no more particklerer man lives this side o' Jordan. Always kickin' about something. Said the last pair o' shoes I made him didn't fit anywhere except on his corns. Was ashamed of 'em every time he plead a case. Felt humiliated every time he saw 'em. (*Plies hammer vigorously.*) Plague take it! I wouldn't hurt a lawyer's feelin's fur the world, specially *his* feelin's. That man is downright insultin' in his ways. Jist because I promised him a pair o' new shoes last Thanksgivin' an' didn't git 'em ready till Christmas he stormed round like a house afire. Said I was worse 'n the tailor an' *he* don't never get anything ready on time. Some people thinks theirs is the only job in town. As if a shoemaker wasn't human an' consekently *had* to fail in his promises *sometimes*. That old pettifogger actooally said if I was responsible he'd cane me. I'd like to see 'im try it. It's thirty year sence anybody tried *that* game on me. But he's good pay an' bin my customer fur thirty odd year. An' customers aint none too plenty these days o' factry shoes. It's mostly patchin' an' people puttin' on airs as if they

was conferrin' favors lettin' you patch their old shoes. Old Boyd has a tongue, though, if he *is* a gentleman. Said I want no better'n a tramp printer, an' a dozen o' them want worth the price of a glass o' beer. Durn him! Cobblin' is a better business 'n the law any day. In my day I had the best trade in Illinois. I've made shoes fur judges, an' generals, yes, an' fur a president, *too*. Made one pair fur Abe Lincoln when he was up here in '59 pleadin' a case. He come in an', sez he, "I want a pair o' kip shoes, make 'em easy!" That was all the directions. When he come fur 'em they went on like grease, an', sez he, "That's the way *I* like 'em." He didn't pinch 'em an' stomp round the shop an' smell the leather an' ask if it was split. He wasn't that sort. He went away an' left his old ones an' like a fool I throwed 'em away. I'd give a thousand dollars fur 'em this minnit. No, I wouldn't. I couldn't afford to give one dollar fur 'em, but I 'low there are folks 'at would.

Knocking at door. Goes to door and carries on conversation with one outside. COBBLER only is heard.

Heh? Minister wants his shoes? They aint done yet. Promised yisterday. So they was, but my old woman wasn't well yisterday afternoon and I had to stay at home with her. When 'll he git 'em? To-morrow. Sure? (*Testily.*) I said to-morrow. (*Comes back down grumbling.*) Some people thinks ye kin do everything at onct. The minister kin write sermons in his slippers, cordin to my tell. Where are his shoes? (*Rummages.*) Plague take it. I'm gittin' forgitfuller every day. People thinks a shoemaker ought to carry everything in his mind. Next thing they 'll be wantin' me to sleep with their old shoes. (*Finds shoes.*) Humph! Easy to tell they was preacher's shoes. He's mighty keerful of 'em. Has to be on his salary, an' people not a payin' up prompt. They've been blacked an' blacked till they aint much left but blackin' an' cracks. Not wuth mendin' nohow, but I s'pose I'll have to doctor 'em up somehow. They ought to be *foxed* but that'd cost mor 'n they're worth.

Throws shoes in pail of water with splash. Takes up another pair.

These are old Mrs. Green's. Now jist see the patches! An' she wants 'em gone over agin. Jacob's coat aint a circumstance to *her* shoes. That woman is tighter 'n a swelled bung. Last time I patched them shoes it took half a day an' I charged her fifty cents coz I knowed I could n't git seventy-five. She said it was an outrage and cut up like a drunken fiddler till I was ashamed of her. Said thirty-five cents was a big price an' she wouldn't pay a red cent more. The old skin-flint! (*Angrily.*) I jist wont fool with them shoes any more. (*Throws them aside.*) I don't care if she does own half the town. I wouldn't be in her shoes for half the earth. I uster want to be rich, but sence I see how riches has affected old Mrs. Green I'm better satisfied to be poor. (*Noise outside.*) What's all that racket?

COBBLER goes to door and looks out.

That's the movin' wagons. The landlord 's been sayin' these fifteen year he'd pull down this old place and build. I got sorter used to his talk and paid no attention to the notice. (*Feels in his pockets.*) Where is that notice? I'm gittin' more 'n more forgetful every day. (*Sits on bench.*) Thirty odd year in one place an' then move! I hoped it wouldn't come in my time. (*Chin on hands.*) I made old Judge Henry's shoes here an' I made Gen. Bridge's boots here, the very pair he was killed in at Chickamaugy an' I made Lincoln's shoes here. They're all dead long ago an' I'm here yet. Thirty year in one place. It's jist like movin' an' old tree. It'll most likely dwindle an' it takes more coddlin' than a dozen young ones an' then if it lives it'll never do no great things. But there aint no use cryin' over spilt milk. I'll have to pack up.

Rises, gets big dry goods box from corner and commences to sort the old shoes.

I 'low half this old truck might as well be burned, but what a fuss there'd be if some of these trumpery old things were lost. Old Mrs. Green would—well, I'll jist wrap *hers* up safe and sound. If they got injured I'd

have to make her a new pair, nothin' short of it, an' then likely she'd want damages for the trouble I caused her. (*Finishes wrapping MRS. GREEN'S shoes and lays them up carefully on shelf. Picks up another pair.*) Great Christopher! Here's a pair of old Mrs. Jink's shoes and I promised 'em to-day never thinkin' of the movin'. There'll be music if she don't git 'em. She's the only person in town I don't dare to disappoint. Tried it once an' it lasted me twenty year. Tongue! That woman could talk down a parrot house any day. She's a buzz saw worked by 'lectricity. The old hyena! Why, that time she wanted to go away visitin' her sister's an' her shoes wasn't quite done—such a tongue lashin' as I got. I don't care much for people's chin-nin' genally. Some I laugh at, an' some I humor, but I stood like a stacher before her and dasn't open my mouth. There must be sich things as special providences, fur old man Jinks is deaf as a post.

Throws some shoes into box. Takes up large pair and pauses. Looks intently at them.

Why, if them aint Col. Sawyer's shoes. Might a known 'em by the size, biggest foot in the state I reckon. He never got any repairin' done 'cause I had no other shoes in the shop big enough for his feet to change into. Canal boats we uster call 'em. Why, the colonel's been gone west these ten year. An' I'm mighty sorry the town lost him. Soul as big as his feet—his immortal soul I mean. (*Laughs.*) He did the town some good. Always startin' some enterprise an' keepin' it a goin', too. He didn't set round till he took root like some people in this town. He *was* a customer. Two pairs of new shoes an' one pair of boots a year at ten dollars a pair. An' no patchin', 'cause he always said life was too short to wait fur patches. An' he never kicked either if I was a month or so late on promise. He was a gentleman an' never tried to brow-beat poor folks.

Throws shoes in box. Takes up another pair.

Farmer Snooks! (*Laughs heartily.*) By ginger! that was funny. (*Laughs till he holds his sides.*) Made that

pair for Snooks an' agreed to take it in trade. Fust thing I knowed, one night when I went home, I found a wagon load o' turnips in the cellar. Mariar was hot but she's one o' them kind 'at never says much. Says she, "Cy, what on airth did you buy so many turnips fur?" Sez I, "I yum if I know. I told Snooks I'd take trade, but I guess I clean forgot to say what kind o' trade." Mariar she never said no more but jist cooked turnips every day fur about two months. Of course I dasn't say nothin', till one day she got dreadful pained an' sick, an' the doctor had to come on the run. He said she was threatened with dropisy, an' I jist fed the rest o' them turnips to the pigs. They kin work their spoiled truck off on the minister an' the editor, for they can't help theirselves, but they don't work it off on me no more.

Takes up another pair.

By jingo, there's an old shoe of Jake Hart's. Know it by the way he always run 'em down. I 'low they're not any worse run down than Jake was. Poor feller, didn't he go to the dogs after his mother left him a fortune? Want a nicer woman in town than Mrs. Hart. But she died at the right time. Poor Jake! Best hearted feller ye ever see. I made the first pair of boots he ever had when he wasn't higher than that. (*Holds hand to show height.*) His mother fetched him in. He spied a piece of red morocco; he would have that fur tops in spite of her. Jake painted everything red. Races, whiskey, bad company, an' then shootin' that man. Guess the man needed shootin', but Jake had to vamoose. I wonder where he is now? Nobody'll ever know I reckon. It's always that way in this world, we aint missed long.

Opens an old shoe box.

What's this? (*Brushes off dust, reads, "Nellie Blake."*) Well I yum! I didn't know that any of Nellie Blake's shoes was here yit. (*Muses.*) What'll I do with *them*? I can't throw *them* away. She was the best girl that ever lived in this town. There aint many angels anywhere on earth, I 'low, but Nellie was one if there be any. I wonder if she would have changed if she'd have

lived? No I guess she'd be the same to-day. Her an' Jake Hart was good friends. Jined yards an' played together. Jake went among the best then. People said he liked Nellie, fur after she died he seemed all broke up like, an' went away with his mother to travel. I wonder if I ought to send them shoes to her mother? I don't know, mebbe it would please her, seein' Nellie was an only child. No, I guess it might do more harm than good. (*With feeling.*) I know what that is. I have a little pair of shoes out at the toes that I dasn't show Mariar, though I know she has things of our little Jack hid away. (*Gets out little shoes. Looks at them fondly, wipes his glasses with handkerchief.*) These durn specs is gittin' so I can't see nothin'. Our little Jack! I kin see him now, runnin' down the street to call me to dinner. He was the youngest and we took to him more than to tothers. I'll lay away Nellie's shoes and keep them along with Jack's. They was friends, too. (*Wipes glasses.*) My specs seems awful dusty. (*Looks fondly at shoes as he puts them away.*) Jack is waitin' fur Mariar an' me. It wont be very long now till we'll see him.

CURTAIN.

DENISON'S ACTING PLAYS.

Price 15 Cents Each, Postpaid, Unless Different Price is Given.

COMEDIES, MELODRAMAS, Etc.		M. F.	
All that Glitters is not Gold, 2 acts, 2 hrs.....	6	3	
Aunt Dinah's Pledge, temperance, 2 acts, 1 hr.....	6	3	
Beggar Venus, 3 acts, 2 hrs. 30 min. (25c)	6	4	
Blow for Blow, 4 acts, 2 hrs...	5	4	
Bonnybell, operetta, 1 h. (25c)	2	5	
Caste, 3 acts, 2 hrs. 30 min....	5	3	
Chimney Corner, 2 acts, 1 hr. 30 min.....	5	2	
Danger Signal, 2 acts, 2 hrs....	7	4	
Diplomates, 4 acts, 3 hrs. (25c)	5	5	
Down in Dixie, 4 acts, 2 hrs. 30 min. (25c)	8	4	
Early Vows, 2 acts, 1 hr. (25c)	4	2	
East Lynne, 5 acts, 2 hrs.....	8	7	
Elma, The Fairy Child, 1 hr. 45 min., operetta. (25c)	9	15	
Enchanted Wood (The), 1 hr. 45 min., operetta..... (35c)	5	6	
Eulalia, 1 h. 30 min. (25c)	3	6	
From Sumter to Appomattox, 4 acts, 2 hrs. 30 min. (25c)	6	2	
Fruits of the Wine Cup, temperance, 3 acts, 1 hr.	6	4	
Handy Andy, Irish, 2 acts, 1 hr. 30 min.....	8	3	
Home, 3 acts, 2 hrs.....	4	3	
Jedediah Judkins, J.P., 4 acts, 2 hr. 30 min. (25c)	7	5	
Lady of Lyons, 5 acts, 2 hrs, 30 min.....	8	4	
London Assurance, 5 acts, 2 hrs. 30 min.....	9	3	
Lost in London, 3 acts, 1 hr. 45 min.....	6	3	
Louva the Pauper, 5 acts, 1 hr. 45 min.....	9	4	
Michael Erle, 2 acts, 1 hr. 30 m.	8	3	
Mitsu-Yu-Nissi, Japanese Wedding, 1 hr. 15 min.....	6	6	
Money, 5 acts, 3 hrs.....	9	3	
My Wife's Relations, 1 hr.....	4	6	
Not such a Fool as he Looks, 3 acts, 2 hrs.....	5	3	
Odds with the Enemy, 5 acts, 2 hrs.....	7	4	
Only Daughter (An), 3 acts, 1 hr. 15 min.....	5	2	
On the Brink, temperance, 2 acts, 2 hrs.....	12	3	
Our Country, 3 acts, 1 hr.....	10	3	
Ours, 3 acts, 2 hrs. 30 min....	6	3	
Out in the Streets, temperance, 1 hr. 15 min.....	6	4	
Pet of Parsons' Ranch, 5 acts, 2 hrs.....	9	3	
Pocahontas, musical burlesque, 2 acts, 1 hr.....	10	2	
Rivals, 5 acts, 2 hrs. 45 min..	8	4	
School Ma'am (The), 4 acts, 1 hr. 45 min.....	6	5	
Sea Drift, 4 acts, 2 hrs.....	6	2	
Seth Greenback, 4 acts, 1 hr. 15 min.....	7	3	
Shadow Castle, 4 acts, 2 hrs. 30 min..... (25c)	5	4	
Soldier of Fortune, 5 acts, 2 hrs. 20 min.....	8	3	
Solon Shingle 1 hr. 30 min.,...	7	2	
Sparkling Cup, temperance, 5 acts, 2 hrs.....	12	4	
Ten Nights in a Barroom, temperance, 5 acts, 2 hrs.....	7	4	
Ticket of Leave Man, 4 acts, 2 hrs. 45 min.....	8	3	
Tony, the Convict, 5 acts, 2 hrs. 30 min..... (25c)	7	4	
Toodles, 2 acts, 1 hr. 15 min..	6	2	
Uncle Josh, 4 acts, 2¼ h. (25c)	8	3	
Under the Laurels, 5 acts, 1 hr. 45 min.....	5	4	
Under the Spell, 4 acts, 2 hrs. 30 min..... (25c)	7	3	
Wedding Trip (The), 2 acts, 1 hr.....	3	2	
Won at Last, 3 acts, 1 hr. 45 min.....	7	3	
Yankee Detective, 3 acts, 2 hrs	8	3	
FARCES AND SKETCHES.			
Assessor, sketch, 10 min.....	3	2	
Babes in Wood, burlesque, 25 min.....	4	3	
Bad Job, 30 min.....	3	2	
Bardell vs. Pickwick, 25 min..	6	2	
Beautiful Forever, 30 min.....	2	2	
Blind Margaret, musical, 30 m.	3	3	
Borrowing Trouble, 25 min....	3	5	
Breezy Call, 25 min.....	2	1	
Bumble's Courtship, sketch, 18 min.....	1	1	
Cabman No. 93, 40 min.....	2	2	
Christmas Ship, musical, 20 m.	4	3	
Circumlocution Office, 20 min.	6	0	
Country Justice, 15 min.....	8	0	
Cow that Kicked Chicago, 20 min.....	3	2	
Cut off with a Shilling, 25 min.	2	1	
Deception, 30 min.....	3	2	
Desperate Situation, 25 min....	2	3	
Dutchman in Ireland, 20 min.*	3	0	
Fair Encounter, sketch, 20 m.	0	2	
Family Strike, 20 min.....	3	3	
Free-Knowledge-ist, 2 acts, 25 min....	3	3	
Friendly Move, sketch, 20 m..	4	0	
Hans Von Smash, 30 min.....	4	3	
Hard Cider, temperance, 15 m.	4	2	
Homeopathy, Irish, 30 min....	5	3	
Ici on Parle Francais, 40 m....	4	3	
I'll Stay A while, 20 min.....	4	0	
I'm not Meself at All, Irish, 25 min.....	3	2	
Initiating a Granger, 25 min..	8	0	
In the Dark, 25 min.....	4	2	

T. S. DENISON, Publisher, 163 Randolph St., Chicago.

DENISON'S ACTING PLAYS.

Price 15 Cents Each, Postpaid, Unless Different Price is Given.

FARCES AND SKETCHES.

	M.	F.
In the Wrong House, 20 min...	4	2
Irish Linen Peddler, 40 min...	3	3
Is the Editor in? 20 min.....	4	2
John Smith, 30 min.....	5	3
Just My Luck, 20 min.....	4	3
Kansas Immigrants, 20 min...	5	1
Kiss in the Dark, 30 min.....	2	3
Larkins' Love Letters, 50 min...	3	2
Limerick Boy, 30 min.....	5	2
Love and Rain, sketch, 20 m...	1	1
Lucky Sixpence, 30 min.....	4	2
Lucy's Old Man, sketch, 15 m...	2	3
Mike Donovan, 15 min.....	1	3
Misses Beers, 25 min.....	3	3
Mistake in Identity, sketch, 15 min.....	0	2
Model of a Wife, 25 min.....	3	2
Movement Cure, 15 min.....	5	0
Mrs. Gamp's Tea, sketch, 15 m...	0	2
My Jeremiah, 20 min.....	3	2
My Lord in Livery, 45 min....	4	3
My Neighbor's Wife, 45 min...	3	3
My Turn Next, 50 min.....	4	3
Narrow Escape, sketch, 15 m...	0	2
Not at Home, 15 min.....	2	0
On Guard, 25 min.....	4	2
Persecuted Dutchman, 35 min...	6	3
Pets of Society, 30 min.....	0	7
Played and Lost, sketch, 15 m...	3	2
Pull Back, 20 min.....	0	6
Quiet Family, 45 min.....	4	4
Realm of Time, musical al- legory, 30 min.....	8	15
Regular Fix, 50 min.....	6	4
Rough Diamond, 40 min.....	4	3
Row in Kitchen and Politician's Breakfast, 2 monologues...	1	1
Silent Woman, 25 min.....	2	1
Slasher and Crasher, 1 h. 15 m...	5	2
Squeers' School, sketch, 18 m...	4	2
Taming a Tiger, 20 min.....	3	0
That Rascal Pat, 35 min.....	3	2
Too Much of a Good Thing, 50 min.....	3	6
Turn Him Out, 50 min.....	3	3
Twenty Minutes Under Um- brella, sketch, 20 min.....	1	1
Two Bonnycastles, 45 min. ...	3	3
Two Gay Deceivers, 25 min.....	3	0
Two Gents in a Fix, 20 min. ...	2	0
Two Ghosts in White, 25 min...	0	8
Two Puddifoots, 40 min.....	3	3
Uncle Dick's Mistake, 20 min...	3	2
Very Pleasant Evening, 30 m...	3	0
Wanted a Correspondent, 1 hr.	4	4
Which Will He Marry? 30 m...	2	8
White Caps (The), musical, 30 min.....	0	8
Who Told The Lie? 30 min...	5	3
Wide Enough for Two, 50 min...	5	2
Women of Lowenburg, histori- cal sketch, 5 scenes, 50 m...	10	10
Woman Hater (The), 30 min...	2	1

	M.	F.
Wonderful Letter, 25 min.....	4	1
Wooring Under Difficulties, 35 min.....	4	3
Yankee Peddler, 1 hr.....	7	3

ETHIOPIAN FARCES.

Academy of Stars, 15 min.	5	1
All Expenses: Or, Nobody's Son, 10 min.....	2	0
Baby Coach Parade, 20 min..	4	2
Back from Californy; Or, Old Clothes, 12 min.....	3	0
Deaf, In a Horn, 12 min... ..	2	0
Hamlet the Dainty, 15 min ...	6	1
Handy Andy, 12 min.....	2	0
Haunted House, 8 min.....	2	0
Joke on Squinim (The). 25 m...	4	2
Jumbo Jum, 30 min.....	4	3
Mischievous Nigger (The), 20 min.....	4	2
No Cure, No Pay, 10 min.....	3	1
Othello and Desdemona, 12 m...	2	0
Prof. Black's Funnygraph, 15 min.....	6	0
Quarrelsome Servants, 8 min..	3	0
Rooms to Let, 15 min.....	2	1
Sham Doctor (The), 15 min...	4	2
Sports on a Lark, 8 min.	3	0
Stage Struck Darcy, 10 min...	2	1
Stocks Up, Stocks Down, 8 m...	2	0
Tricks, 10 min.....	5	2
Two Pompeys (The), 8 min....	4	0
Uncle Jeff, 25 min.....	5	2
Unhappy Pair (An), 10 min. ...	3	0
Villikens and His Dinah 20 m...	4	1
Wax Works at Play, 30 min...	3	1
William Tell, 15 min.	4	0



The publisher believes that he can say truthfully that Denison's list of plays is on the whole the best selected and most successful in the market. *New Plays* will be added from time to time.

Manuscripts, not only of plays but of any books similar to those in Denison's catalogue, will receive careful attention and if accepted will be paid for at current prices.



T. S. DENISON, Publisher, 163 Randolph St., Chicago.

CHOICE PLAYS AND AMUSEMENT BOOKS.

Plays by T. S. DENISON.

That the plays written by T. S. Denison are, all things considered, the best for amateurs, is attested by their very large and increasing sale.

New plays in **this type**.

COMEDIES.

	ACTS.	TIME.	M. F.
Odds With the Enemy,	5,	2 hrs.	7-4
Seth Greenback,	-	4, 1 h. 15 m.	7-3
The School Ma'am,	-	4, 1 h. 45 m.	6-5
Only Daughter,	-	3, 1 h. 15 m.	5-2
Louva, the Pauper,	-	5, 2 hrs.	9-4
Under the Laurels,	-	5, 2 hrs.	5-4
Danger Signal,	-	2, 1 h. 45 m.	7-4
Our Country, Historical Play,	-	-	3, 1 h. 10-5
Topp's Twins,	-	4, 2 hrs.	6-4
It's all in Pay Streak,	3,	1 h. 40 m.	4-3
The New Woman,	-	3, 1 h.	3-6

FARCES.

	ACTS.	TIME.	M. F.
Initiating a Granger,	-	25 m.	8-
Wanted, a Correspondent,	2,	45 m.	4-4
A Family Strike,	-	20 m.	3-3
Two Ghosts in White,	-	20 m.	-8
The Assessor,	-	10 m.	3-2
Borrowing Trouble,	-	20 m.	3-5
Country Justice,	-	20 m.	8-
The Pull-Back,	-	20 m.	-6
Hans von Smash,	-	2, 30 m.	4 3
Irish Linen Peddler,	-	2, 40 m.	3-3
Kansas Immigrants,	-	20 m.	5-1
Too Much of Good Thing,	-	45 m.	3-6
Is the Editor In?	-	20 m.	4-2
Pets of Society,	-	20 m.	-7
Wide Enough for Two,	-	45 m.	5-2
Patsy O'Wang,	-	35 m.	4-3
Rejected,	-	40 m.	5-3
A First-Class Hotel,	-	20 m.	4-
Mad, Princeton's Temple of Beauty,	-	-	20 m. -6
Dude in Cyclone,	-	20 m.	5-3
The Cobbler,	-	10 m.	1-

TEMPERANCE.

The Sparkling Cup,	-	5, 2 hrs.	12-4
Hard Cider,	-	-	10 m. 4-2
Only Cold Tea,	-	-	20 m. 3-3

Topp's Twins and It's all in the Pay Streak, 25c. each. All others, 15c. each. Postpaid.

Large Catalogue Free.

DIALOGUES.

Friday Afternoon Dialogues.
Twenty-five original pieces, - 25c.
When the Lessons are Over.
New Dialogues, New Drills. New Plays, - - - - 25c.
Dialogues from Dickens.
Thirteen Selections, - - - 25c.
All Sorts of Dialogues.
Just out. Dialogues for youths, children, and little tots, also pieces for special occasions, - - - 25c.

SPEAKERS.

Friday Afternoon Speaker.
For pupils of all ages, - 25c.
Choice Pieces for Little People, 25c.
Patriotic Speaker.
Carefully selected from best authors, 25c.
Dialect Readings.
Irish, Dutch, Negro, Scotch, etc., 25c.
Sunday School Pieces, - 25c.
Scrap-Book Recitations.
A choice collection of pieces, pathetic, humorous, descriptive, prose and poetry. Eleven Nos., per No. 25c.

TABLEAUX AND SHADOWS.

Shadow Pictures, Pantomimes,
Charades, and how to prepare them, 25c.
School and Parlor Tableaux.
For school, church and parlor, 25c.
Wax Figures of Mrs. Jarley.
With full directions for preparing, 25c.

OPERETTAS.

Bonnybell, - - - - 25c.
Elma, the Fairy Child, - - - 25c.
Eulalia, - - - - 25c.
Enchanted Wood, - - - - 35c.
Pocahontas, - - - - 15c.

SPECIALTIES.

Private Theatricals.
How to select plays, form, cast, rehearsals, rain, lightning, etc., 25c.
Negro Minstrels.
Just the book needed. Tells the whole thing, - - - 25c.
Work and Play
A gem of a book for children in school or church entertainments, - 25c.
Pranks and Pastimes.
All sorts of games, puzzles, shadow scenes, etc., for evening parties, 25c.
Social Card Games.
An excellent manual of all common games, also *tricks and diversions*, 35c.
Debater's Handbook (cloth), - 50c.
Good Manners, - - - - 25c.
Everybody's Letter-Writer, - 25c.

T. S. DENISON, Publisher, 163 Randolph St., Chicago.

SCRAP-BOOK RECITATIONS,

By HENRY M. SOPER,

President of Soper School of Oratory, Chicago.

Twelve Numbers, 144 pp. Each, Post Paid, 25 Cents Per Number.

No. 1. Contains a great range of pieces for all ages, from 10 years upward. Also the "FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY," an admirable exercise, arranged for schools: Music, Recitations, Dialogues, Tableaux, etc.

"Excels anything we have ever seen for the purpose."—*Eclectic Teacher*.

No. 2. Contains prize oration, "Battle of Gettysburg" (in no other publication). Also "TEMPERANCE SUPPLEMENT," comprising some of the finest recitations extant.

"The selections are fresh, pure and elevating."—*Missouri Teacher*.

No. 3. Has "The Problem of Life," from Theodore Tilton's master oration (published nowhere else), "The Battle of Cannæ," a copyrighted Historical Poem; "CHRISTMAS SUPPLEMENT," of Recitations and Dialogues.

"There is such a variety of prose and poetry, pathos, fun and narrative as is not often found in the compass of one small book."—*Practical Teacher*.

No. 4. Has the finest Decoration Day Poem extant,—"The Heroes and the Flowers;" A Heroic Medley; "Battle of Mission Ridge;" A Temperance Song Recital; Choice Humor, etc.

"Good in variety and will suit all moods and conditions."—*Inter Ocean, Chicago*.

No. 5. Contains the famous "Charlot Race" from "Ben Hur;" copyrighted selection by Bill Nye; Grady's "New South;" Wit, Humor, Pathos, etc., in great variety.

"Some of the best specimens of the patriotic and humorous styles."—*N. Y. School Journal*.

No. 6. Has the "Ballad of Mary Jane," a Popular School Pantomime and Recitation, 6 characters; A Humorous Medley; Riley's "Elf Child;" Fine Eulogies on Grant and Logan.

No. 7. Has "Cupid among the Strawberries," One Act Comedy (2 males and 3 females), "Mission of the Press," a prize oration; Ingalls' Eulogy on Burns; How Blinks Named the Baby, and much of latest humor, etc.

No. 8. SOPER'S PATRIOTIC SPEAKER.—Washington Centennial Speeches of Depew, Albertson, Mason, McIntyre, Gunsaulus, Hirsch, Burrows, Thurston, Blake; also Choicest Patriotic Orations and Poems, from Cicero down to the present day; for all occasions.

No. 9. Has the famous Interstate College Contest Oration, "Individualism in Society" by M. H. Lyon; "How It Really Was," a humorous dialogue (4 characters); "Irish Molly," new heroic historical poem; "Queen of the May," introducing several characters; appropriate songs, recitations, etc. Several other fine selections.

No. 10. Contains selections for Washington's Birthday, Thanksgiving and other holidays. This number is largely humorous, pieces by Robt. Burdette, Mark Twain, T. S. Denison, *Detroit Free Press*; Also "Auntie's Courtship;" "The Bicycle Girl;" "The Facial Family;" "Presentation of the Trumpet;" etc.

"The selections are admirable."—*Eli Perkins (Melville E. Landon)*.

No. 11. Full of new and good things; will be fully up to its predecessors. Contains Prize Contest Orations. SUPPLEMENT OF ORIGINAL SELECTIONS by W. H. Head, including: "He Laughed at Fire," monologue for a man (very funny); "The Trials of a Columbian Guard;" humorous dialect recitation, "Dot New Song," etc. Ready April 1, 1895.

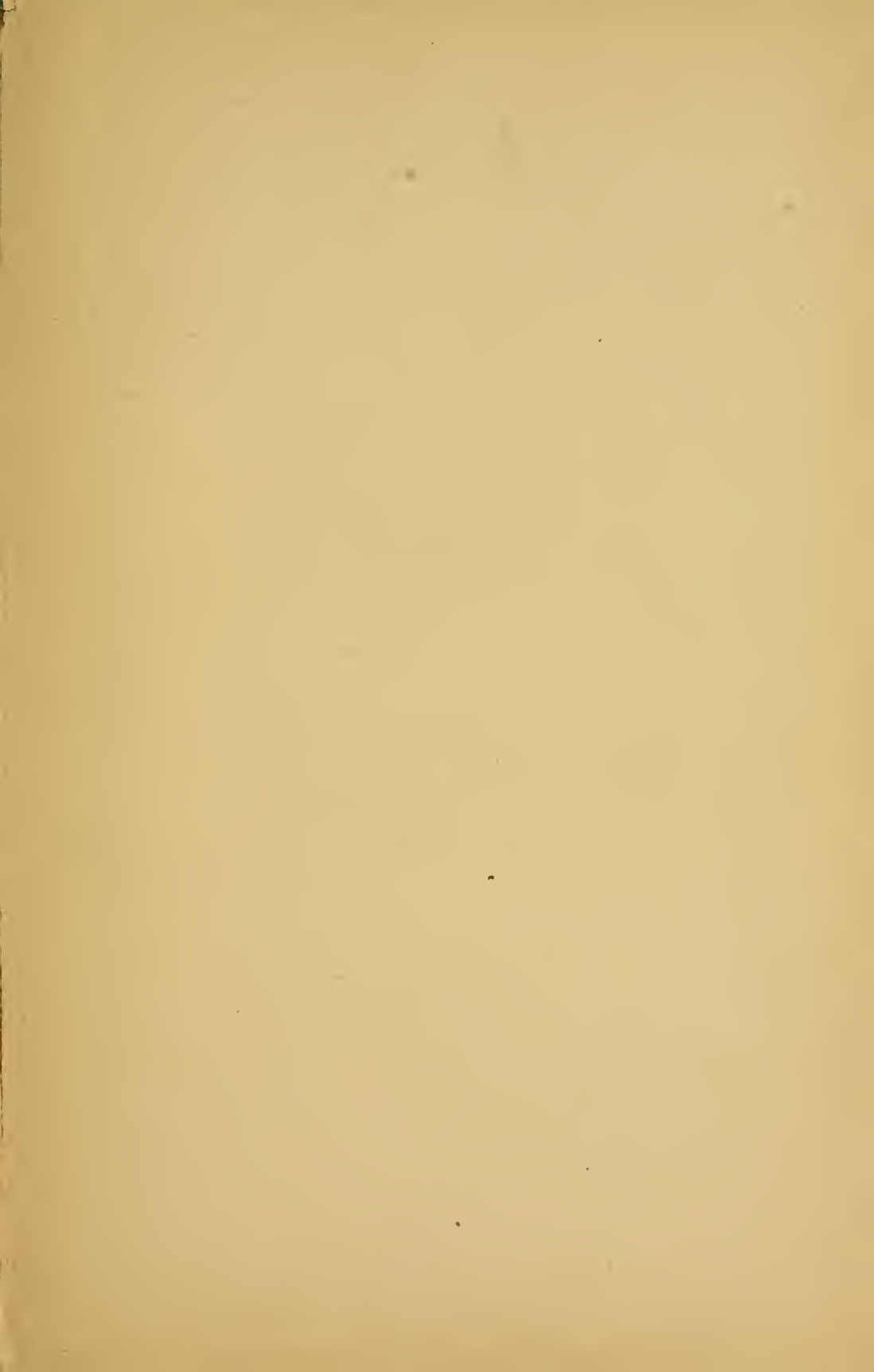
SOPER'S DIALECT READINGS. Full of Fun—French, German, Negro, Scotch, Yankee, Chinese, Hoosier, Italian, Cockney and Yorkshire Dialects, 144 pages, 25 cts.

"Just the thing for those in search of recitations in dialects."—*Popular Educator*.

T. S. DENISON, Publisher,

163 Randolph Street, - - - - - CHICAGO.





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 863 522 7

